

THREE ILLUSTRATED STUDIES
*Looking into
Acadie:*

Brenda Dunn, Sally Ross, and Birgitta Wallace
with an Introduction by Barbara LeBlanc

Edited by Margaret Conrad



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BRENDA DUNN, a former Parks Canada historian, has carried out extensive research on Acadian life in the Port-Royal and Minas areas during her 30-year career. In addition to her work for Fort Anne, Grand-Pré, and the Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Sites, she served as an advisor for the Acadian village model at the Canadian Museum of Civilization and the film project *Premières Terres Acadiennes*. She is a descendant of Isabelle/Elizabeth Melanson, one of the children born in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Melanson settlement at Port-Royal.

SALLY ROSS studied in France and received her License ès Lettres and her doctorate from the Université de Tours. She taught the history and culture of French Canada for ten years and now works as a learning resource consultant. She is co-author with Alphonse Deveau of the award-winning book *The Acadians of Nova Scotia Past and Present* published by Nimbus.

COVER IMAGE:

An Acadian woman of Chezzetcook in the 1850s. She's wearing a striped skirt and jacket, similar to those in figures 39-40. This image appeared in the book *Acadia; or A Month with the Blue Noses*, by Frederic S. Cozzens, published in New York in 1859. It is a lithograph derived from a photograph, probably the earliest photo of an Acadian person.

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PREFACE

This publication exists because Margaret Conrad, Nancy's Chair in Women Studies, Mount Saint Vincent University, said it should. Many others thankfully agreed, including the three authors, so Margaret went to work as volunteer editor, and here you are, holding some very important information never before seen in print.

The three accounts in this report were originally delivered as illustrated talks in January/February 1997 as part of the program *Celebrating Acadie*. Co-sponsored by the Museum Services Division, the Museum of Natural History, Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Ecosse, Conseil culturel acadien de la Nouvelle-Ecosse, and Canadian Heritage, Parks Canada, the program featured exhibitions and events highlighting Acadian history and traditions. The central exhibition, *Looking into Acadie*, was co-produced by Parks Canada and the Moncton Museum with support from the New Brunswick Museum and the New Brunswick Archaeological Service, and featured information and artifacts recovered through several archaeological projects.

Many people have made this legacy of that exhibition possible, starting with Margaret Conrad, Brenda Dunn, Barbara LeBlanc, Sally Ross, Birgitta Wallace, and the hard-working, good-humoured *Celebrating Acadie* team that created the whole program and ending with the very able clerical assistance of Pam Dunbar, layout by Etta Moffatt, translation by Margaret Anne Hamelin, French editing by Annie Williams, and printing by Corporate Services Division of the Nova Scotia Museum.

We have maintained the original illustrated nature of these papers because we received permission to publish images from many collections. Thanks to the Musée national du Château de Versailles et du Trianon; Musée d'Orbigny Beron; Dr. Aleric Faulkner; Reverend Clarence-Joseph d'Entremont; Andrea Kirkpatrick, New Brunswick Museum; Charles Lindsay, Atlantic Service Centre, Parks Canada; Peter Ryder, Canadian Museum of Civilization; Marc Bissailon, National Archives of Canada; Ray Whitley, Learning Resources Technology, Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture; Jesper Blade, National Museum, Copenhagen, Denmark; István Németh, Szepmuveszeti Muzeum, Budapest, Hungary; Lars Lofgren, Nordiska Museet, Stockholm; Claude Picard; Clayton Karkosh; Dr. Susan Young; Peter Crowell, Argyle Township Court House and Archives; Musée acadien de Pubnico-ouest; Tourism Nova Scotia; Curt Speight, Nova Scotia Housing and Municipal Affairs; Scott Robson, History Collection, Museum Services, Nova Scotia Museum; Valerie Lenethen, Maritime Museum of the Atlantic; Sharon Shipley, National Library of Canada; Garry Shutlak, Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management; Wedgeport Tuna Museum.

Sheila Stevenson

Manager, Interpretation
Museum Services Division
Nova Scotia Museum

INTRODUCTION

Barbara LeBlanc

The three articles in this collection offer us many ways of seeing, of discovering, of understanding, and of learning about the Acadian past. Originally prepared in the winter of 1997 as illustrated talks for the *Celebrating Acadie* festival at the Museum of Natural History in Halifax, they now appear in print due to the urging of historian Margaret Conrad, who suggested that they be published and donated her editorial services to the cause. Sheila Stevenson, the cultural history division's Manager of Interpretation, enthusiastically endorsed the project. This volume now serves as a permanent footprint in time, providing valuable written documentation of the rich heritage of the Acadian people.

The three authors in this volume—Birgitta Wallace, Brenda Dunn, and Sally Ross—bring to life facets of the Acadian experience through a skilful interweaving of text and illustration. Birgitta shows us how archaeology can fill the gaps in written information about the Aboriginal and European peoples who populated seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Acadia. Uprooting the soil, searching for remnants of material culture, discovering bits of evidence from the past, she helps us to understand aspects of the early lifestyle in Acadia. Brenda Dunn has pieced together many details from a range of sources to describe the character of Acadian society, in particular the roles of women before the Deportation (1755-63). Sally Ross uses photographs, another often neglected source of information, to illuminate the experiences of the Acadians who struggled to re-establish themselves in Nova Scotia between 1764 and 1867.

Birgitta Wallace places her archaeological treasures within the dynamic process of two migrations: the first, relating to the arrival of the French in Acadia; the second, to the establishment of permanent settlements. After assessing the material remnants left behind by seasonal fishermen and fur traders in such locations as Canso and Port-Royal, she introduces us to the image of oxen footprints embedded in the clay subsoil near the second Port-Royal, the site of today's Fort Anne in Annapolis Royal. She then turns our attention to the second stage of migration when French peasant families began to settle the land. Weaving her material finds into the context of the dramatic conflicts and intrigues that typified European beginnings in Acadia, Birgitta brings life to the principal actors—aristocratic figures such as Champlain, d'Aulnay, and Razilly—and offers us a dazzling array of supporting characters in her discussion of deputies, priests, clerks, artisans, soldiers, and peasants.

Brenda Dunn focuses her attention on an often neglected area of study: Acadian women in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Delving into women's roles in society, she helps us to imagine what life was like for women as wives, mothers, and co-workers in old Acadia. Her sources are many and various: household objects unearthed in archaeological explorations, clothing described by sojourners in the colony, family relations revealed in legal documents and other public records. While the society she describes was traumatically shattered by the Deportation, the kinship and community practices she explores were

maintained by the survivors of that tragic event and were replanted in Nova Scotia by the Acadians who returned from exile and hiding following the Seven Years' War (1756-1763).

Sally Ross examines the challenges faced by the post-Deportation Acadians as they struggled to rebuild their society in Nova Scotia after a period of forced migration. Driven from their productive farms, excluded from positions of power, they became a marginalized minority, the objects of prejudice and injustice. The themes she explores—land ownership, religion, language, education, and political representation—enable us to witness the courage and tenacity of a people who gradually triumphed over the many obstacles confronting them. Sensitive to the deeper meaning that hovers below what might appear, at first glance, a banal gesture, Sally reminds us that the naming of a geographical place such as Pointe-à-Major is an empowering moment for a people living in a province where the names of conquerors dominate the map.

There are also themes that transcend the individual papers. Sally and Brenda both explore the less studied phenomenon of stratification within Acadian society itself and warn us that nothing is as simple as we might think, no groups as homogenous as we might like to believe. In Birgitta and Brenda's papers we are reminded of the often forgotten but extremely important fact that Acadians had a close alliance with the Mi'kmaq, who helped them to survive in their new homeland, and, as Sally suggests in her discussion of early schooling in Nova Scotia, shared with the Acadians marginalization within the dominant culture.

Stimulating and richly textured, these articles leave us at once satisfied and wanting more. They also raise serious issues about the status of Acadians today and, on a more general level, the plight of the planet on which we live. As we turn the last page, Sally Ross's juxtaposed image of the piping

plover and the Acadian flag, a metaphor for endangered species of all kinds, remains to haunt us. Perhaps it will serve as a wake up call to those of us who slip towards total assimilation by abandoning our language, history, and culture for a present-minded global superficiality.

For Acadians and "others," research such as that presented here helps us to build awareness of the rich cultural resources that make up the human community. Museums and other cultural institutions have a critical role to play in this work. It is fitting that the Nova Scotia Museum has ensured the publication of these fine papers that open our eyes to the multiplicity of ways of seeing, discovering, understanding, and learning about one group's unique history and culture.

An Archaeologist Discovers Early Acadia

Birgitta Wallace

The first European settlements in what became Canada and the United States followed somewhat different patterns. English colonies along the Atlantic seaboard were usually self-sponsored and had as a goal to transform large tracts of land into an agricultural landscape, settled by a transplanted English immigrant population. With the exception of a few abortive English and Scottish settlement attempts in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, all the first permanent European settlements in Canada were French in origin. French authorities intended their colonies to be permanent, but little effort was put into sending out a large European population.

If we adopt an approach described by anthropologist David Anthony, we can conclude that the French pattern represents an earlier stage of migration from Europe to North America than that of the English.¹ Anthony analyzed the dynamics of population movements and concluded that all long-distance migrations represent a process that takes place in predictable stages. The first stage is a period of discovery, involving advance 'scouts.' The scouts are relatively few in number and form a work force. Characteristically, they are single men, adults but young, who migrate to the new area as mercenaries, merchants, craftsmen, and hired hands. They come for a limited period of time, then return home.

In the first stage, the settling takes place in a leapfrogging pattern resulting in 'island' communities located in desirable areas separated by vast expanses of unsettled territories. The migrants come from a limited number of points of origin and proceed along well-

defined routes to specific locations. Information about the new areas filters back to the locations from which the migrants originated. Studies have shown that the first ten per cent of migrants into an area can, in most instances, be used to predict the ethnic origin of subsequent migrations. The motives and social organization of the scouts can be entirely different from the motivation and organization of later migrants. In the second stage, whole families emigrate. These families come to stay and become self-sufficient in the new area. This represents the real period of settling.

The first stage of the French migration consisted of seasonal fishermen who began arriving on the shores of North America early in the sixteenth century. Within a relatively short period, they began engaging in a lucrative fur trade with Aboriginal peoples. Shore stations were set up in widely dispersed locations suitable for these two functions but little else (Figure 1). Buildings were flimsy and inhabited only during the summer months. One of the busiest of these summer stations was located at Canso, now



fig. 1

The dry fishery. Detail from map by Hermann Moll, 1718. National Archives of Canada. NMC 8931

known as Grassy Island, offshore from the present town of Canso, Nova Scotia (Figure 2). These fishermen were the advance 'scouts.'

fig.2



Grassy Island, site of the Canso fisheries. From the early sixteenth century until the 1720s, the islands of Canso harbour were the scene of a thriving French fishery. Parks Canada

The first permanent settlements, the habitations or trading posts, were also part of this first stage of migration. In 1600, Pierre du Gua, Sieur de Monts, from the Saintonge region in France, undertook an exploratory journey to the St Lawrence region in preparation for a more fixed settlement. Building on his explorations, he mounted a second expedition in 1604, with the geographer

Samuel de Champlain as one of the expedition members (Figure 3). The chief purpose of the expedition was to explore and create new economic opportunities with regard to the fur trade, fishing, and other commercial activities. When the location of their first settlement—St. Croix on the current border between the United States and Canada—proved unsuitable, the expedition base was moved to Port-Royal on the present-day Annapolis River in Nova Scotia.

fig.3



No portraits exist of Samuel de Champlain. This is how the artist R. Harris imagined him. National Archives of Canada, C-82743



fig.4

Samuel de Champlain's plan of the Port-Royal habitation, 1613
 A. Artisan's lodging
 B. Platform for cannon
 C. Storehouse
 D. Lodging of Gravé & Champlain
 E. Forge
 F. Palisade of stakes
 G. Oven
 H. Kitchen
 I. Gardens
 K. Cemetery
 L. Water of the basin
 M. Drainage ditch
 N. Dwelling
 O. Small building for rigging of pinnaces

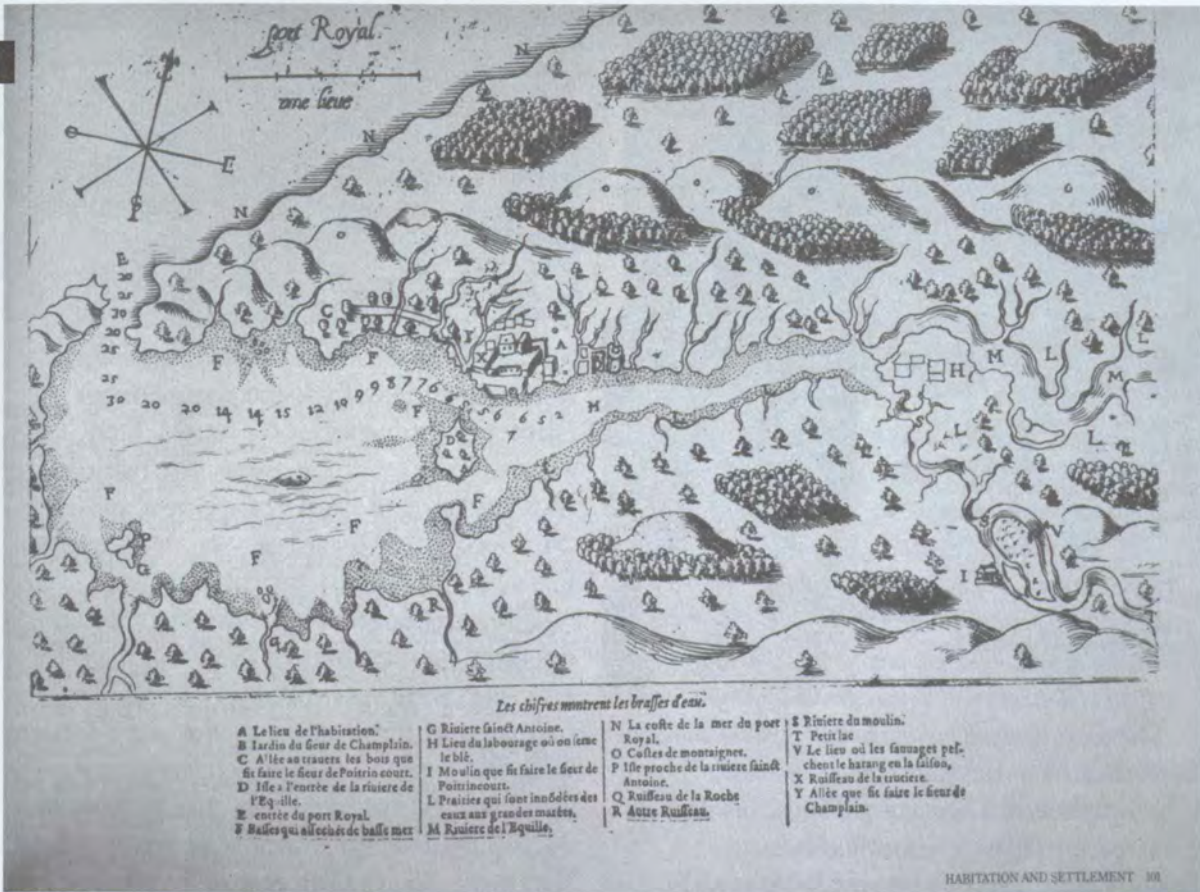
A Logemens des artisans.
 B Plate forme où estoit le canon.
 C Le magasin.
 D Logement du sieur de Pont-graue & Champlain.
 E La forge.

F Palissade de pieux.
 G Le four.
 H La cuisine.
 O Petite maisonnette où l'on retiroit les vtanfiles de nos barques; que depuis le sieur de Poitriencourt fit

rebastir, & y logea le sieur Boulay quand le sieur du Pont s'en reuint en France.
 P (1) La porte de l'abitation.
 Q (2) Le cemetiere.
 R (3) La riuere.

C8760/From a copy at the National Archives of Canada, original held at the National Library of Canada, Bibliothèque nationale du Canada.

fig.6



Map of the first Port-Royal by Samuel de Champlain in 1613. The habitation is flanked by a trout brook and Champlain's garden. The wheat fields are at what is now Fort Anne, and the mill on the Alain River. National Library of Canada, Bibliothèque nationale du Canada NL15325

fig.5



A reconstruction of the first Port-Royal habitation, based on Champlain's drawings, was built in 1939. The original habitation lay closer to the shore. Parks Canada/Photo by K.Karklins

fig.8



The most important early habitations. Parks Canada/map by B. Wallace

fig.7



These imprints of ox hoofs are the earliest signs of Europeans at the second Port-Royal. Shod with steel shoes open at the front, the oxen made these imprints on a wet day when the clay ground was soft. The line to the right might be a wheel track. No one returned until long after the ground had dried and the imprints were firmly fixed in the clay. Parks Canada/Photo by K. Graves

fig.9



"Louis XIV at the founding of the Academy of Sciences and the Observatory, 1667." Painting by Henri Testelin. Musée de Versailles, Service de documentation photographique de la réunion des musées nationaux

fig.10



Detail of the above, showing Louis XIV

The Port-Royal habitation, established in 1605, has been described in detail by Champlain and Lescarbot (Figures 4 and 5). It lasted until 1613 when it was burnt by Samuel Argall of Jamestown, Virginia. The Port-Royal group had their wheat fields upriver at what is now Fort Anne, marked H on Champlain's map (Figure 6). In 1990, archaeological excavations at Fort Anne revealed at the very lowest level, predating the 1630s, the foot prints of oxen, embedded in the clay subsoil, and what might be a cart track (Figure 7). At least one print can be identified as an ox shoe. Unlike horse shoes, ox shoes are in two parts so that they are open in front. These foot prints are almost certainly from the fields of the old Port-Royal habitation.

Over the next half century, about 30 habitations sprang up in Acadia (Figure 8). Among the chief ones were Fort Sainte-Marie at the mouth of the St John River, also named Fort La Tour after its owner; Jemseg about 50 kilometres upriver from it; Miscou and Nipisiquit in the northeastern part of present-day New Brunswick; Pentagoet in Maine; another Fort La Tour at what is now Port La Tour on the south shore of Nova Scotia which also had Fort

Sainte-Marie de Grâce at LaHave; a new Port-Royal; Chedabouctou at Guysborough; Sainte-Marie at Sherbrooke; and Sainte-Anne and Fort Saint-Pierre in Cape Breton. The economic foundation of the habitations was the fur trade with the ancillary pursuits of fishing, lumbering, and mining of coal and gypsum. Since the fur trade was a major activity, which depended on furs collected by the Mi'kmaq and Maliseet, the habitations were generally located near major Aboriginal transportation routes. Easy access to the sea, to facilitate the fishing and transport to and from France, was another criterion. These locations were frequently not very suitable for agriculture.

The early habitations were owned and operated by members of the French aristocracy who were sponsored by cartels. Key members of these cartels possessed close ties with the French court which issued permits for overseas ventures. Thus, not only were decisions made far from the scene of action, they were also the product of Byzantine intrigues that were typical of the French court between 1610 and 1715, the period of Louis XIII, the Regency, and Louis XIV (Figures 9 and 10). Competition between individual habitation owners was fierce and resulted in conflict, each habitation being fortified and armed against the others, and each carrying on a lobby at court where decisions were often made with little knowledge of the 'new world.'

French habitations in North America shared a number of physical characteristics. They were fortified, and their owners referred to them as 'habitation' or 'fort' without any distinction between the two terms. The layout was square or rectangular, with buildings arranged around a courtyard. Gardens and other plantings were located outside the main compound. The fortifications consisted of buildings, and, where needed, earthworks, bastions, and palisades. The habitation formed a nuclear settlement containing living, work, and storage facilities as well as a chapel for worship. Located at great distances from each



fig. 11

"Merry Company." Painting by W. Buytewech, 1620. Szepmuvzeti Múzeum, Budapest

other, and separated by expansive tracts of land with no European settlements, these habitations were indeed 'island' communities.

Social organization in the habitations reflected the exploitive and competitive nature of French colonial enterprise. Between 40 and 200 people, the majority of them men of prime working age, lived in these 'island' communities. Social levels were distinct and stratified. At the top was the habitation owner, with or without his family. He was generally a member of the aristocracy, frequently a military officer, and often a younger son who did not inherit the family estate in France. The only career options offered the nobility were the mili-

Mi'kmaq women. Micmac Association for Cultural Studies; Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture: Learning Resources and Technology.



fig. 12
fig. 13



Mi'kmaq at the Port-Royal habitation. Micmac Association for Cultural Studies; Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture: Learning Resources and Technology

tary, the church, certain government offices, or service in the colonies (Figure 11).

Next on the scale were the habitation owner's deputy, or 'lieutenant,' and as well as one or two priests. Like his employers, the deputy was also frequently a member of the nobility. Priests tended to the religious needs of the habitation and conducted missions among the Aboriginal peoples. The habitation owner employed a clerical staff for book-keeping and fur traders for handling face-to-face trade. In addition, there were specialized artisans such as smiths, stone masons, carpenters, sawyers, copper-smiths, locksmiths, bakers, gardeners, upholsterers, tailors, shoemakers, surgeons, slate-layers, coopers, apothecaries, surgeons, soldiers, gunners, and sailors. The soldiers were the private retinue of the habitation owner, not part of a national army. Ships and their crews, which included fishermen, were vital to the enterprise and also recruited by the habitation owner.

There was, of course, a kitchen staff. In the early habitations this staff was all-male. Female domestics were part of the group whenever the habitation owner's wife was present. Unlike the English in New England, the French in Acadia formed close alliances with the Aboriginal peoples among whom they settled. Indeed, in the early years of colonization, French officials often considered it unnecessary for women to emigrate because of the potential for securing wives from the local population (Figures 12 and 13).

The immigrant labour force therefore consisted primarily of young single men, or married men who had left their families behind. Known as *engagés*, they were contracted for a limited period of time, usually two to three years, after which they returned to France. They conform closely to the role of the 'scouts' envisioned by David Anthony in the first stage of migration. Many of the men came from the general area of the family estates of the habitation owner, or his supply port, and thus from a restricted point of origin. In the case of

Acadia, the chief embarkation port was La Rochelle in western France (Figure 14).

fig. 14



Except for modern means of transportation, La Rochelle harbour has changed little since the days when the city was a major point of embarkation for Acadia. Photo by B. Wallace

fig. 15



Mill in La Rochelle. Musée d'Orbigny-Bernon, La Rochelle.

fig. 16



"Peasant Family," Detail from painting by Louis Le Nain, 1640s. Musée de Versailles, Service de documentation photographique de la réunion des musées nationaux.

Under the terms laid down by the king, the habitation owner was required to bring over a predetermined number of colonists and settle them within his land grant. These colonists were organized into a seigneurie, which represents the second stage of the migration pattern. As a social institution, the seigneurie represented a modified form

of the feudal relations prevailing in France. The duties of the seigneur to his colonists/tenants, known as *censitaires*, was to parcel out land to them, issue hunting, fishing, and wood-cutting licenses, maintain a manor-house for his own household, build and operate a mill, establish a court, and build roads. In return he collected rents for the land and received a share of the crops. The tenants obtained rights to their land, but they had to perform periodical work as labourers for the seigneur, and help to support the church (Figures 15 and 16).

The duties of the seigneur to the king included submissions of enumerations and accounts of his seigneurie. The seigneur was also to reserve and maintain rights to all oak trees, mines, and minerals for the king. The seigneurie was transferred in direct succession to the seigneur's heirs. If, for some reason, it had to be sold, the king would receive one-fifth of the price. The only ways of becoming a seigneur were by being a member of the nobility or the King's officer corps, by inheritance, or for special services rendered the crown. While the feudal framework was imposed on the first French settlements in Acadia, it quickly became modified in North America.

If we are to use Anthony's model for migration, we would predict that the ethnic origin of the settlers should be the same as that of the *engagés*. This seems to be true in Acadia where the 'scouts' came from several areas: Champagne, Normandy, the Basque areas of France, and, above all, the area around La Rochelle and Loudon, including the seigneuries owned by Razilly, Richelieu, and d'Aulnay. Genealogical and linguistic studies seem to support a strong connection between the first Nova Scotia settlers and southwestern France.² The colonists for the seigneuries came as families and as permanent settlers, but their total number was small: only 160 people in 1641 according to the prefect of the Capuchin missions.³ By 1671 the numbers had increased to no more than 500 in all of Acadia. This is in sharp

fig.17



Aerial view of present-day Fort Anne, facing west. D'Aulnay's fort was situated on the point where the two rivers meet. Parks Canada/ Photo by K. Graves

contrast to New England, where, by that time the population numbered over 50,000.⁴ There was little motivation for the seigneur to bring colonists as he had to pay for their passage and support them until they became self-sufficient and could reciprocate with rents and taxes. It was a major investment that took a long time to pay off.

A new habitation, which replaced the old one burned by Argall, was located 15 kilometres up river from the first Port-Royal habitation. Near a major gathering point of the southwestern Mi'kmaq, it was built on a small escarpment where the Alain River issues into the Annapolis River and today is the site of Fort Anne (Figure 17). The new Port-Royal had begun as a Scottish fort, built in 1629 by Sir William Alexander who gave Nova Scotia its present name. By the Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye in March 1632, it was handed over, with its ammunition, livestock, and grain, to the French.⁵ That same year, Isaac de Razilly, well-known from his victory over the Huguenots in La Rochelle a few years earlier, had been declared Lieutenant Governor of New France, and established a habitation and headquarters at LaHave on the Atlantic side of Nova Scotia. Razilly, in turn, placed René Le Coq, Sieur de la Saussaie, a veteran from the first Port-Royal settlement, in command of the new Port-Royal and moved almost half the population there from LaHave.⁶

After the death of Razilly in 1636 Port-Royal came under the command of his cousin Charles de Menou, Sieur d'Aulnay. He had arrived in Acadia in 1632 with

fig.18



Castle Charnizay, Indre-et-Loire, France. Parks Canada/ Photo by B. Wallace.

Razilly. An aristocrat who could trace a noble lineage back to the time of the Crusades, he was a member of one of the most influential families at the French court. The powerful Cardinal Richelieu was one of his relatives. D'Aulnay grew up on family estates at La Chaussée, Martaisé, and Aulnay near Loudon and Billy outside Mirébeau as well as Charnizay outside Châtillon-sur-Indre in the Loire Valley in France (Figure 18).⁷ Receiving the education befitting a young nobleman, d'Aulnay, like so many of his peers, began his career as a naval officer.

Assuming command at Port-Royal, d'Aulnay moved most of the remaining occupants of the LaHave habitation to the new Port-Royal, which became the headquarters of Acadia. The reason for the move was the fertile soils and salt marshes along the Annapolis River which were more suitable for agriculture than the rocky terrain of Nova Scotia's south shore. There were now efforts to make the habitation self-sustaining through agriculture, and settlement was encouraged. With the new Port-Royal, we are at the borderline to the second stage of the French migration.

As a seigneur, d'Aulnay parcelled out land to his tenants along the shores of tidal rivers, ordered the salt marshes drained, and had the first dykes built. Dyking technology was introduced from southwestern France and became a specific feature of Acadian agriculture. In 1643 D'Aulnay noted that he had 400 mouths to feed.⁸ Of these 200 were soldiers, labourers, and artisans. His tenants included 20 households from his home estates around Aulnay.⁹



fig.19

Portrait of Charles de Menou, Sieur d'Aulnay et de Charnisay. A late nineteenth-century overpainted photographic image on wove paper. Location of original portrait unknown. New Brunswick Museum, Webster Canadiana Collection, W987

While establishing himself at Port-Royal, D'Aulnay made a financially useful family alliance when he married Jeanne Motin.¹⁰ Although only from the lesser nobility, Jeanne was the daughter of Louis Motin, Sieur de Courcelles, the rich Controller of the Salt Stores in the Charolais in France. Through Jeanne, d'Aulnay became allied with other influential habitation owners in Acadia.

D'Aulnay (Figures 19 and 20) was not the only contender for control of Acadia. A royal decree issued by the French king granted a portion of the land assigned to d'Aulnay to



fig.20

D'Aulnay and his wife Jeanne Motin with three of their children at Port-Royal. Parks Canada/Painting by Terry MacDonald

Charles de La Tour of the Cape Sable seigneury.¹¹ This development, as well as differences in regional origin, personality, and religious sect, launched the two men on a lifelong conflict. The struggle took place on two fronts: via diplomatic manoeuvring at the court in France and warfare in Acadia. In 1643, Charles de La Tour attacked d'Aulnay, killing three of his men and burning his mill. D'Aulnay retaliated by attacking La Tour's stronghold at what is now Saint John, New Brunswick, in 1645 while La Tour was in Boston. Charles La Tour's wife, François Jacquelin, gallantly defended the post but could not hold out against the stronger force of d'Aulnay.¹²

D'Aulnay and Jeanne Motin had seven surviving children. In May 1650, the 45-year-old D'Aulnay died in a boating accident on the Annapolis River. His family was left penniless and heavily in debt to his French creditors. One creditor, Emmanuel Le Borgne from La Rochelle, claimed the fort and all its buildings, with their content.¹³ In the summer of 1653, the widow d'Aulnay consolidated her position by marrying Charles de La Tour, her husband's archenemy, who, since 1651, had served as the Lieutenant Governor of Acadia but continued to struggle against other contenders. The marriage was practical rather than a romantic twist in a bizarre soap opera. As mother of Joseph, d'Aulnay's oldest son and heir, Jeanne Motin was one of the influential forces in Acadia but was threatened by d'Aulnay's creditors. La Tour and Madame d'Aulnay eventually had five children together, and a great number of Acadians in Canada and Cajuns in the United States are descendants of this union.

D'Aulnay's original fort, built by the Scots, was a circular palisade, quite different from French forts. In 1643, after the skirmishes with La Tour, he rebuilt it completely, giving it the rectangular plan seen in the upper right corner of a late seventeenth-century map (Figure 21). It had earthworks, bastions, and a ravelin. It was small, about

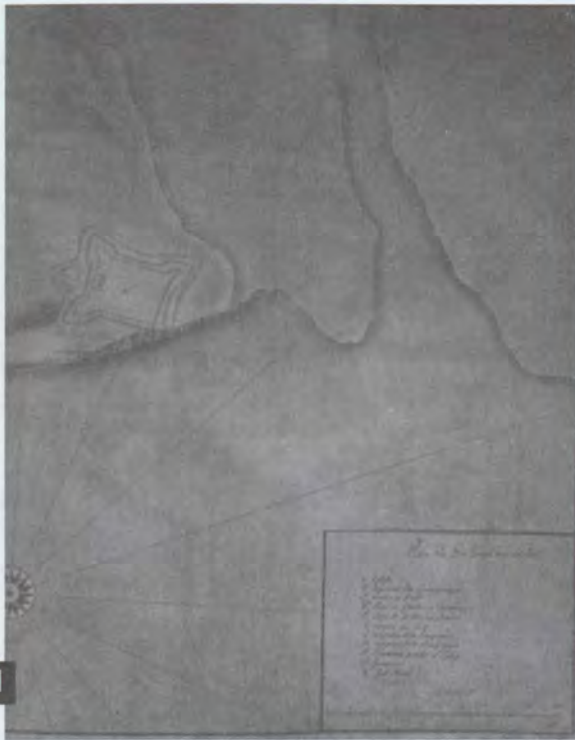


fig.21

"Plan du Port Royal et son fort." 1688. The map shows how one corner of d'Aulnay's fort had collapsed by erosion when this map was drawn. C15694/From a copy at the National Archives of Canada; original held at the Dépôt des Fortifications des Colonies, Archives nationales, Centre des archives d'outre-mer, Aix-en-Provence, France.



fig.22

Detail of "Plan tres exact du terrain ou sont scituees les maisons du Port Royal et ou lon peut faire une Ville considerable" by Jean-Baptiste Louis Franquelin, 1686. D'Aulnay's fort was by this time an overgrown ruin. To the north of it, towards the street, was the governor's residence. The street is more or less where St. George street is now, and the cemetery is close to it. The church is in the vicinity of what is now the Southeast bastion. C35567/From a copy held at the National Archives of Canada, original held at the Dépôt des cartes et plans de la Marine, France

50 metres by 43 metres in the interior. In 1688, when the map was drawn, a corner of the old fort had collapsed into the sea.

The d'Aulnay fort was destroyed by the English in 1658,¹⁴ and a map of 1686 (Figure 22) gives a vivid picture of its ruins and surrounding town. The fort ruins are in the bottom left corner, and close to it, the mill. To the right is the church and the rectory. The town plan is almost the same as that of today. The street is now St. George Street while the cemetery is close to the present cemetery, and individual dwellings are lined up along the waterfront as they still are.

Several early habitations in Acadia have been the subject of archaeological excavations. Pentagoet in Maine has been excavated by Alaric and Gretchen Faulkner, while Fort La Tour at Portland Point in Saint John, New Brunswick, was excavated in the 1950s by J. Russell Harper and in 1963 by Norman Barka.¹⁵ LaHave has been excavated by David Christianson for the Nova Scotia Museum.¹⁶ Canso on Grassy Island has been investigated by Rob Ferguson for Parks Canada.¹⁷ What was believed to be the Port-Royal site was excavated in 1938 by C. Coatsworth Pinkney, a landscape architect who had worked on the Colonial Williamsburg reconstruction.¹⁸ Evidence now at hand shows that the actual Port-Royal site was closer to the water, with most of it now gone. When the reconstruction was built in 1939, it was primarily based on Champlain's drawing, not on the excavation. This is fortunate since what the excavation uncovered was a nineteenth-century farm! I have directed six seasons of excavations at Fort Anne, the site of the later Port-Royal, in Annapolis Royal. Some of these excavations focused on the d'Aulnay fort (Figure 23). I have also test-excavated Fort Saint-Pierre at present-day St. Peters in Cape Breton.¹⁹ The following will present some of the results of these excavations.

The most exciting find from the site of d'Aulnay's fort was an inscribed stone. The

Excavating d'Aulnay's fort, facing southwest. The lower portions of the earth wall on the left were part of d'Aulnay's fort. Parks Canada/Photo by H. Henderson



fig.23

fig.24



The stone, which may have been over the entrance to the fort, had toppled over on its side. Parks Canada/Photo by K. Graves

fig.25



Finding a slate slab with the name of d'Aulnay's oldest son and heir and dated 1651 was a highlight of the excavation. Parks Canada/Photo by K. Graves

fig.26



The inscription on the slab reads
IOSEPH DEMENOV SIEVRDONES 1651
Parks Canada/Photo by K. Graves

stone, tumbled over on its side, lay at what may have been the entrance to the fort (Figures 24 and 25). It bore the name of d'Aulnay's oldest son Joseph, and the date



fig.29

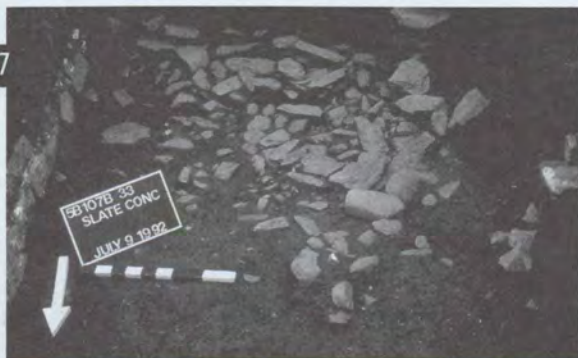
Reconstruction drawing of the Acadian fort Pentagoet. The buildings were mostly of stone except for a chapel above the entrance which was half-timbered. Drawing by A. Faulkner. Alaric Faulkner and Gretchen Faulkner, *The French at Pentagoet 1635-1674, An Archaeological Portrait of the Acadian Frontier* (Orono and Fredericton: Maine Historical Preservation Commission and the New Brunswick Museum, 1987), 106

1651 (Figure 26). This was one year after d'Aulnay's death when Joseph, who was then 15 years old, was proclaimed Sieur d'Aulnay, indicating that he had inherited his father's seigneurie and title.²⁰

The ruins of d'Aulnay's fort were practically obliterated when they were replaced with a series of forts shortly after 1700. As a result, the archaeological remains are disturbed and sparse. The only building remains uncovered from the d'Aulnay fort was a collapsed wall of stone, mostly slate, set in a loose clay mortar, with a plank floor (Figures 27 and 28). It had been destroyed by fire, in all likelihood the result of the 1658 demolition of the fort by the English. Slate set in mortar was also used at Pentagoet (Figure 29).²¹ Since Pentagoet was also owned and operated by d'Aulnay, it is not surprising that we find the same type of buildings at Port-Royal. By contrast, the chief construction material at La Tour's fort on the St John River was lumber.²² We have no idea of the size of the Port-Royal structure. At Pentagoet the buildings were small, with little architectural differentiation between d'Aulnay's residence and the accommodations of his work force. None appear to have been manors or castles of the type in which d'Aulnay had been raised.

While tile roofs were common in France and used at Fort La Tour, the d'Aulnay

fig.27



What little remained of building walls from the d'Aulnay fort had collapsed. Parks Canada/Photo by J. Creda

fig.28



The d'Aulnay fort had burnt as shown by the charred floor planks. Parks Canada/Photo by K. Graves

fig.30



Fragments and roof tiles of slate and fireplace brick from d'Aulnay's fort. Parks Canada/Photo by B. Wallace

fig.31



Cross-section through a pit containing iron slag and scrap iron. The slacking tub might have been set into the pit. Parks Canada/Photo by R. Ferguson

building appears to have had a roof of slate. In Acadia most roofs seem to have been of boards or thatch. Slate roof tiles can be recognized by their nail holes. Brick was used sparingly, mainly as hearth tiles and for ovens (Figure 30). This absence of brick is typical of the initial French settlement. A forge had been located a few metres from the stone building and a pit associated with it is seen here in cross-section. In and around it was slag, ashes, and coal. Special craftsmen would have been required to operate the forge which, interestingly, was fired with coal (Figures 31 and 32).

The region's coal had been recognized as a major resource from the time of the first French explorations. Since the great forests on the European continent had become severely depleted, substitute fuels and building materials were coming into demand. The Fort Anne coal has been analyzed and found to come from the Joggins deposits which pushes the date for the beginning of coal mining at that location back into the seventeenth century.²³

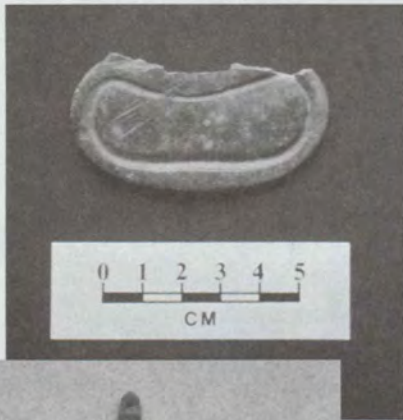
As we now know, raw coal was not a suitable fuel for a forge because the high sulphur-content of most coals makes the iron worked in a coal fire brittle. The use of coal in the forge here and at nearby Pentagoet must be seen as an experimentation with this new fuel.²⁴

A piece of sword counterguard was found within the deposits from the d'Aulnay fort (Figure 33), indicating that professional

fig.32



Slag and coal found around the slag pit. Analyses show that the coal came from the coal beds at Joggins, Nova Scotia. Parks Canada/Photo by B. Wallace

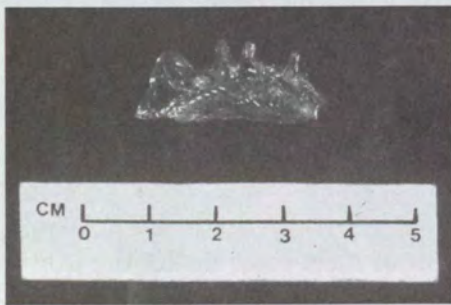


Fragment of sword guard from d'Aulnay's fort. Parks Canada/Photo by B. Wallace



fig.33
fig.34
fig.35

Small crucifix of brass with enamel inlays from the d'Aulnay fort before construction. Parks Canada/Photo by B. Wallace



Shard of Venetian glass from the d'Aulnay fort. Parks Canada/Photo by B. Wallace

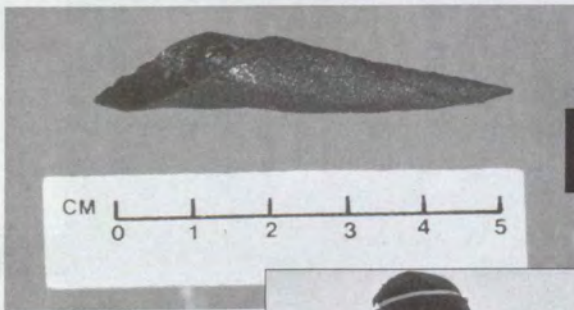


fig.36
fig.37

Tinkling cone of brass from the d'Aulnay fort. Parks Canada/Photo by K. Graves

Tinkling cones in use. Micmac Association for Cultural Studies; Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture; Learning Resources and Technology



fig.38

Section through the garbage pit located immediately outside the collapsed building in the d'Aulnay fort. Garbage was generally thrown out the kitchen door. The garbage heap is visible as a dark band at the bottom of the excavation trench. 1990. Parks Canada/Photo by H. Henderson



fig.39

Identification of the bones in the garbage showed that the inhabitants of the second Port-Royal ate a great deal of beef and pork. Parks Canada/ Drawing by Bruce Rickett

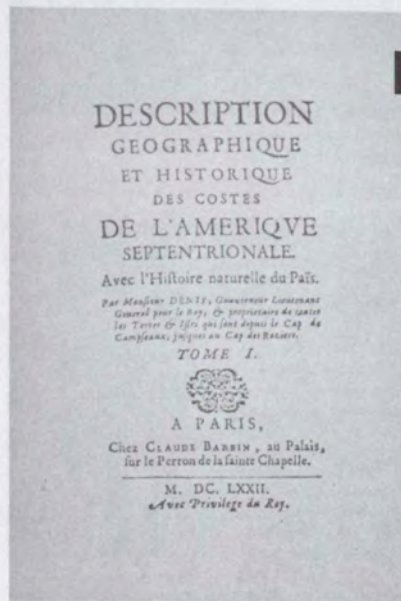


fig.40

Nicolas Denys wrote a detailed description of how Acadia developed between 1632 and circa 1670. His book was published in Paris in 1672. A facsimile version of the book was produced in 1982 by the Reverend Clarence-Joseph d'Entremont.

soldiers were present. There was also a small brass crucifix (Figure 34) as well as a sherd of Venetian glass (Figure 35). The latter was from a highly elaborate goblet, among the best that money could buy. Fragments of copper kettles were evidence both of household activities and of the fur trade with the Aboriginal inhabitants. Tinkling cones, also of copper, which were popular among the Mi'kmaq as decorations, offer further testimony to the commercial exchange between Natives and newcomers (Figures 36 and 37).

As agriculture developed at Port-Royal, the area became known as the general storehouse of Acadia.²⁵ To some extent, this is reflected in a midden adjacent to the stone building. In cross-section, the midden can be seen as a darker stain at the bottom of the excavated area (Figure 38). When the faunal material in the midden was analyzed, it was found that the proportion of domesticated mammals (Figure 39) was much higher (about 75 per cent) than at Pentagoet, and included 32.3 per cent cattle, 30.5 per cent pigs, and 13.2 per cent sheep, with some

game, fowl, and fish.²⁶ Among the vegetables cultivated were carrots.²⁷ The people at Port-Royal, it appears, ate well.

Another competitor to d'Aulnay was Nicolas Denys, an entrepreneur belonging to the lesser nobility of the city of Tour in France. One of the habitations belonging to Denys was Fort Saint-Pierre in Cape Breton. Today Nicolas Denys is best known for his eye-witness account of the Maritimes, with detailed descriptions of the cod fishery and Acadia's Aboriginal inhabitants, published in 1672 (Figure 40),²⁸ but he was also the third major operator of habitations in Acadia. Allied with La Tour, he fought a bitter campaign against d'Aulnay and his affiliates.

Fort Saint-Pierre was located at present-day St. Peters in Cape Breton, on the Atlantic coast where the present St. Peters Canal cuts through a narrow isthmus to link the Atlantic with Lake Bras d'Or (Figures 41 and 42). Situated on a Mi'kmaq portage route and near a central gathering place for

fig.41



Air photo of St. Peters and the site of Fort Saint-Pierre. At the top, Lake Bras d'Or, at the bottom, the Atlantic. The two bodies of water were joined by a canal in 1854-1869. Maritime Resource Management Service/NS Geomatics Centre, Housing & Municipal Affairs, Amherst, Nova Scotia

fig.42



View of the Fort Saint-Pierre site from the top of Fort Dorchester, St. Peters. Parks Canada/Photo by R. Ferguson

fig.44



The site of Fort Saint-Pierre. A house and outbuildings were erected for the lockmaster of St. Peters Canal in 1876. The house lies in the northeast corner of the former fort. The northern fort wall can be seen as a slight rise to the east of the house. The south wall no longer exists but was located where there is a slight rise in the ground a short distance north of the road. Parks Canada/Photo by R. Ferguson

fig.45



The fort wall viewed from inside the fort. The ditch outside it and the area behind it have been filled in. Parks Canada/Photo by R. Ferguson

fig.43



Fort Saint-Pierre is shown as double square outline to the left of the shaded area. The square fort is surrounded by a ditch. The entrance to the fort is in its eastern side. To the east of the fort are building compounds. Map of the St. Peter's area in 1731. C21721/From a copy at the National Archives of Canada; original held at the Dépot des Fortifications des Colonies, Archives nationales, France

the northern Mi'kmaq, the habitation was in a convenient location for the fur trade as well as the fishery. The portage, where the canal is now, was 800 metres long, linking the Atlantic coast with interior Cape Breton and, indirectly, the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Nicolas Denys improved the portage by building a skid road, over which ships could be hauled by manpower.

The site was originally directly on the shore, but fill from the canal was dumped in front of it. The water line in Denys' time was about where the road is now. Fort Saint-Pierre was small and square, about 30 metres by 30 metres, with earthworks topped by a palisade and surrounded by a ditch (Figure 43). Only a small portion of the earthworks remain. The site was partially disturbed in 1876 with the construction of a large house for the canal's lockmaster. Later additions included a shed, a barn, and a water cistern. The ditch surrounding the fort has been filled in, and fill from the digging of the canal in 1854 to 1869 has been spread over the entire site (Figures 44 and 45).

In 1985 Parks Canada conducted a rather extensive test excavation under my direction to confirm that the site was indeed Nicolas Denys' Saint-Pierre. Two buildings were

partially uncovered. They had been of wood and daub with plank floors, set on sleepers which in turn rested on stone footings. Consisting of stone hearths that projected



fig.46

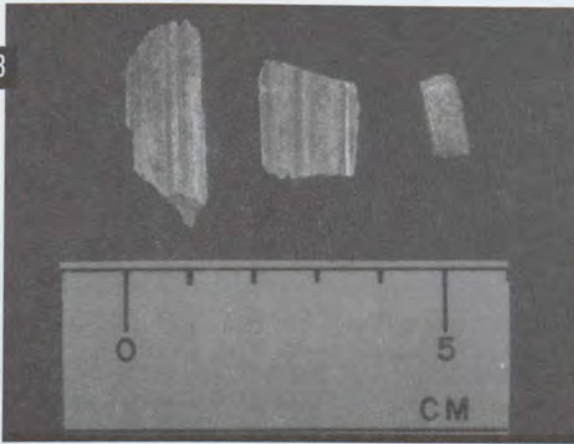
The buildings had no proper foundation. The floors had been set on lines of stones laid directly on the ground. The burnt floor is evidence of the 1669 fire. This building contained a great variety of elaborate household goods and could have been the residence of Nicolas Denys. Parks Canada/Photo by B. Wallace



fig.47

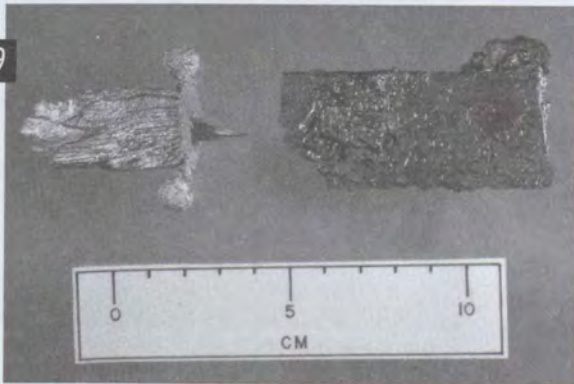
The second and third floors of this building in the French town of New Rochelle shows a construction similar to the of the excavated structures in Fort Saint-Pierre. Parks Canada/Photo by B. Wallace

fig.48



Remnants of plaster mouldings from the Fort Saint-Pierre site. Parks Canada/Photo by Derek Harrison

fig.49



Fragments of a dagger from the Fort Saint-Pierre site. The dagger had been encased in a leather sheath at the top of the picture. Parks Canada/Photo by Derek Harrison

fig.50



Fragment of a relief-moulded dish of polychrome coarse earthenware from the Saintonge area in France. Although small, the piece is evidence that elaborate tableware similar to that in the previous figure was used at Fort Saint-Pierre. Parks Canada/Photo by Derek Harrison

into the room, the fireplaces were topped by hoods which led the smoke into flues within the wall. The same type of fireplaces were found at Pentagoet and at Fort La Tour and were unlike the English fireplaces, which consisted of fireboxes and free-standing chimneys. The houses themselves were long

and narrow and followed an overall linear arrangement. Burnt daub with wood imprints and burnt wood indicate that the dwellings had been clay-filled frame buildings, a construction typical of Normandy but also relatively common farther south (Figures 46 and 47). From all evidence, the buildings were small, a far cry from the lavish surroundings the habitation owners were used to in France.

There was evidence of social ranking. Of two structurally identical dwellings, one had a significantly more opulent inventory than the other as far as furnishings were concerned. It had decorative plaster mouldings (Figure 48) and much richer artifacts; for instance, an expensive dagger with a leather sheath (Figure 49). The artifacts found in

fig.51



Plate of relief-moulded polychrome coarse earthenware from the Saintonge area. Musée d'Orbigny-Bernon, La Rochelle

fig.52



Decorative bronze or brass mounts are another indication of a sophisticated household inventory in one of the houses at Fort Saint-Pierre. The piece with the Baroque cherub could have been for a cutlery case. To the right is a piece of a cock for a flintlock gun. Parks Canada/Photo by B. Wallace

fig.53



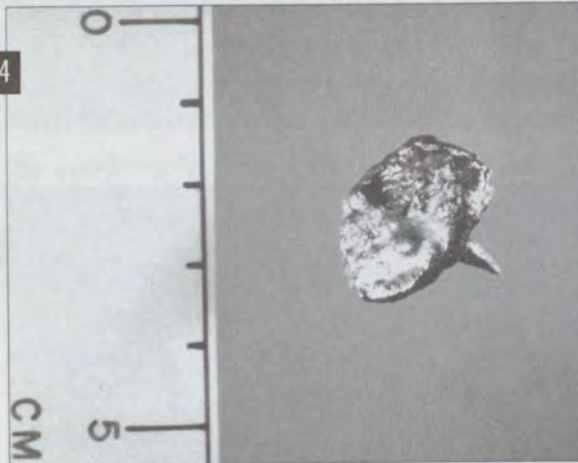
Fourteenth- to sixteenth-century eating utensils: glass bowl ca. 1500; pewter jug ca. 1400; silver bowl ca. 1300; silver spoon ca. 1500; pewter plate ca. 1500; knives and scabbard ca. 1500. Photo by Lennart Larsen, National Museum, Copenhagen, Denmark

fig.56



Fragments of 'slick stone' of glass from Fort Saint-Pierre. Analyses showed that the glass had been coloured blue with cobalt but changed colour when the site was burnt and the 'stone' shattered. Parks Canada/Photo by Derek Harrison

fig.54



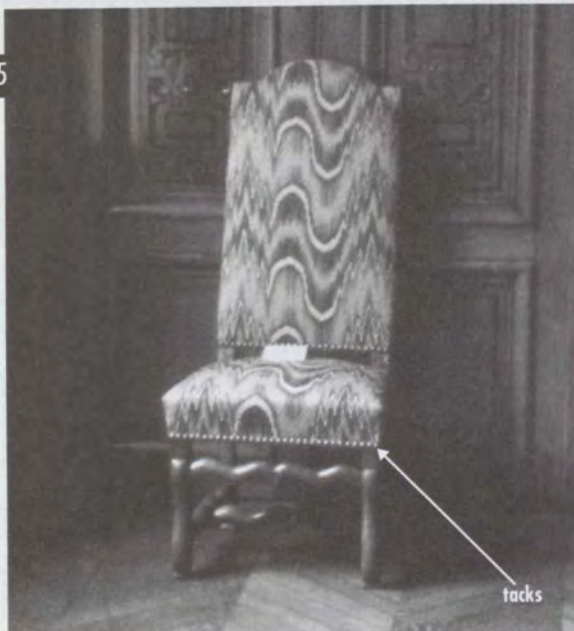
One of the brass tacks from what is assumed to be Nicolas Denys' residence. Parks Canada/Photo by Derek Harrison

fig.57



Slickstones have been used for at least 1000 years and remained in use until this century. Nordiska museet, Stockholm

fig.55



Seventeenth-century upholstered chair showing tacks like those found at Fort Saint-Pierre. Musée d'Orbigny-Bernone, La Rochelle

this particular building makes it likely that this was the residence of Nicolas Denys himself. Although the dwellings of the seigneurs were modest, their lifestyle was not, as illustrated by the sherd of a relief-moulded plate (Figures 50 and 51). They maintained their aristocratic lifestyle, with servants and dinner ceremonies. A similar situation was noted by Alaric and Gretchen Faulkner at Pentagoet in Maine.

The cutlery at Fort Saint-Pierre shows evidence of elegant dining. A brass mounting with a typical baroque cherub has a diameter matching that of the brass mount on a cutlery set from Denmark (Figures 52 and 53). Such sets were used only by the elite. Brass tacks found in the dwelling with the rich inventory probably were used in furniture upholstery (Figures 54 and 55). Fragments of slick stones indicate the presence of linen and lace collars and cuffs. Slick stones are devices of glass used for a form of ironing (Figures 56 and 57). While

the material to be 'ironed' was still wet, it was rubbed with slick stones until it became flat. It was then left to dry before it was moved or folded. Material, especially linen, smoothed this way, develops a shiny surface, as crisp as if it were starched. Lace collars and cuffs were a status symbol. Their laundering and smoothing was the work of female servants, who were clearly also on the scene.

Fort Saint-Pierre was at least in part destroyed in 1653 by d'Aulnay's creditor, Emmanuel Le Borgne,²⁹ but its final demolition was by accident. On a cold winter night in 1669 the fort went up in flames. Denys himself has given a dramatic account of it: *A fire having caught by night in a granary...consumed all my buildings, all my merchandise, furniture, ammunition, provisions, flour, wine...everything I had...All my people were obliged, like myself, to flee its violence, naked in shirt only.*³⁰

At the time of the fire, the fort stood fully supplied with all its inventory, which burnt on location. We found ample evidence of the fire. It had been so hot that even some of the ceramics had warped. After the fire, Denys and his people, who had managed to save some food, made temporary shelters near the ruins but as soon as conditions permitted, the French contingent left the ruined Fort Saint-Pierre for Nipisiquit near present-day Bathurst, New Brunswick, another habitation owned by Nicholas Denys. Fort Saint-Pierre remained abandoned and was never rebuilt.

The archaeological material has shown that throughout the first and second stages of migration to Acadia the physical differences between the dwellings of various strata of society were minor or non-existent. It was the aristocracy who had to scale down to the modest houses of a low-status residence in Europe. The construction materials, size, and shape of the residences of the elite were essentially the same as the dwellings of their subordinates, even if they may have had more square feet per capita. The

lifestyle of the elite, however, did not change as indicated by the differentiation in artifacts between dwellings. The evidence for elaborate dinner services is complemented by contemporary household inventories which list ample supplies of velvet and silk clothing, velvet hangings, upholstered furniture, and elegant dinner services, including dinner services of precious metals, found, for instance, in the Isaac de Razilly inventory.³¹ Social ceremonies and ranking are inherent in these status symbols.

The status symbols and strict social ranking lasted only over the first generation. By the time of the second and third generations, a great social levelling had taken place. The children of the original elite married the children of those who worked for their fathers, a situation that would have been unlikely in France. The lands along the Annapolis River were rich, and a certain affluence became widespread, but as the French settled in, the English took over most of Acadia in 1713. The French were confined, first to Cape Breton and to what is now Prince Edward Island. Between 1755 and 1763 most of the Acadians were deported from the region. The second stage of settlement thus came to an abrupt end.

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20. Joseph is sometimes said to have been born in 1639, which would have made him 12 years old in 1651. However, in a document dated 1658 in which he pleads for his rights as hereditary governor of Acadia, Joseph gives his age as 22 going on 23, which suggests that he was born in 1636 or 1637 (Lauvrière, 166). His grandfather, René de Menou de Charnizay, became his guardian, and, as such, governor of Acadia. The d'Aulnay ownership was contested by the merchant Emmanuel Le Borgne in La Rochelle to whom d'Aulnay was heavily in debt. Le Borgne laid claim not only to the Port-Royal seigneurie but also to the Aulnay seigneurie in France. See Clarence-Joseph d'Entremont, *Histoire du Cap-Sable de l'an mil au traité de Paris, 1763*, Vol 2 (Eunice, Louisiana: Hebert Publications, 1981), 716, 747; Lauvrière, 23; Massignon, 474

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ASPECTS OF THE LIVES OF WOMEN IN *Ancienne Acadie*

Brenda Dunn

The lives of women in *ancienne Acadie* in the years before the Deportation of 1755 is an enormous subject. My goal is a modest one: to present an idea of what life was like for these women by exploring certain aspects of their material culture, family life, and legal status. Most of this information focuses on Port-Royal, the area for which we have the best documentation and where archaeological excavations have taken place. Recent artwork based on this information has been included in an attempt to evoke a sense of time and place.

fig.1

Depiction of seventeenth-century Acadian families in an orchard at Port-Royal.
Parks Canada/Artist
Terry MacDonald



Artwork such as that shown in Figure 1 can only be conjectural. Since relatively few documents have survived, little can be said with certainty. Some of the most detailed evidence is found in the correspondence between government officials at Port-Royal and the Minister of the Marine in France, the minister in Louis XIV's court responsible for the French colonies. The cases present the exception rather than the rule; they came to official notice only because there was a problem. By seeing how the rules of behaviour were being broken, we gain an insight into what the rules were.

The family was the cornerstone of Acadian life in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. By 1650, some 50 families were living in or near Port-Royal, and they constituted the foundation of the Acadian people.¹ Acadian society was interwoven with a complex system of family relationships that united Acadians throughout the colony into a close-knit community. Indeed, the whole system of Acadian dykeland agriculture depended on the co-operative effort facilitated by kinship ties.

Women obviously played important roles in a society based on family and kinship networks. There were few aspects of Acadian life in which they were not involved. In 1707, the date of the last French census of Acadia before the English conquest of 1710, women made up approximately half of the adult population in the main areas of settlement.² Of the 1500 people enumerated in Acadia at that time, 240 of 475 adults were women—223 wives, 15 widows, and two single women, including a nun, Sister Chausson (or Chauzon). The number of both single women and single men would actually have been higher than reported in the census because unmarried adult children usually lived with their parents and were counted in the category of “boys over the age of 14” and “girls over the age of 12,” even if they were in their 20s. The census form's inability to deal with single women is seen in the classification of Sister Chausson as a “girl over the age of 12.”³

There was very little variety in Acadian Christian names. The majority of Acadian women were named either Marie, Anne, Madeleine, Marguerite, Cécille, Jeanne, or

Françoise. One of the reasons for this repetition was that children often took their godparent's name. Wives kept their maiden names all of their lives. Thus Cécille Landry, the wife of Pierre Theriot, remained Cécille Landry throughout her life, but was also known as Madame Theriot and, after her husband's death, as the widow Theriot. Widows in seigneurial families were exceptions, known as 'Madame' rather than 'the widow,' as seen in the 1707 census where we find "Mde de Belleisle widow," "Mde Freneuse," and "Mde Belleisle," along with the "widow Naquin."

Although Acadian society was more egalitarian than that of France in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, there was some stratification. The upper level consisted of families that had been granted seigneuries, such as the Mius d'Entremonts, the La Tours, and the Damours. While a seigneurial grant gave them status, it did not mean that they were wealthy. Families that were well established, relatively prosperous, and respected in the community, such as the Bourgeois, the Melansons, and the Robichauds, but who lacked seigneurial grants, were also part of the Acadian elite. To these two groups could be added the French officials and military officers assigned to the colony before 1710, many of whom married Acadian women.

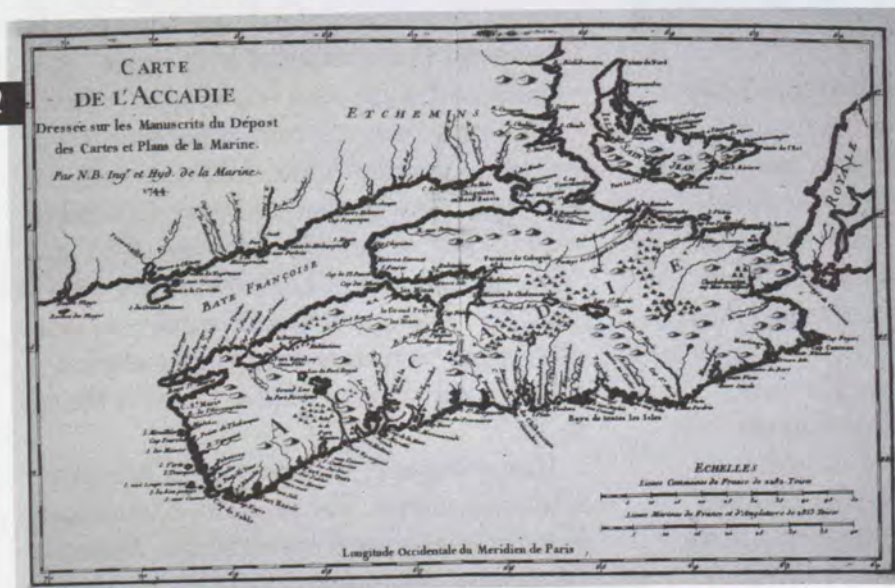


fig.3

Acadian settlements typically were located on high ground adjacent to the salt marshes of the rivers and bays of the Bay of Fundy. Model: Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull.

Settlement was concentrated along the rivers and bays of the Bay of Fundy, known appropriately as *la Baye Française* (Figure 2). Most Acadians lived in small family settlements scattered along the upland overlooking the salt marshes (Figures 3 and 4). Typically, the settlement was started by a married couple and expanded as the children married and settled near their parents. The members of the settlement worked cooperatively with each other and with their neighbours in adjacent settlements to build dykes and to cultivate the reclaimed salt marshes. The Bay of Fundy and its rivers and bays served as highways between the various settlements and with the outside world. Although their primary interest was agriculture, many Acadians were at home at sea, where they took part in a coastal fishery and traded with New England, Louisbourg,

fig.2



Map of Acadia, 1744 by Bellin. "Carte de L'Acadie Dressée sur les Manuscrits du Dépôt des Cartes et Plans de la Marine" National Archives of Canada NMC-19267



fig.4

Recent archaeological and historical evidence were the basis for this model of an eighteenth-century Acadian settlement. Canadian Museum of Civilization.

and beyond. Small fishing establishments were scattered along Acadia's ample coasts.

The three main areas of Acadian settlement were Port-Royal on the Dauphin River (now the Annapolis River); Chignecto on the Isthmus of Chignecto; and Les Mines, or Minas (the area around the Minas Basin) (Figures 5 and 6). As the population of the Minas area grew, Pisiquid (in the Windsor area) and Cobequid (in the Truro area) became separate districts. Each of the three main areas had a principal community or village: Grand-Pré in Minas, Beaubassin in Chignecto, and Port-Royal on the Dauphin River. In to-day's terms, we would call them service centres for the rural communities around them. Here could be found the church and presbytery, the notary, the sur-

geon, the inn, and the tavern. Port-Royal even had a billiard hall in the early years of the eighteenth-century.

The small family settlements consisted of farmsteads, with houses, outbuildings, and kitchen gardens that were enclosed to keep out wandering livestock and wildlife (Figures 7, 8 and 9). Some of the settlements had windmills where Acadian millers turned the wheat from the reclaimed marshes into flour (Figure 10). Houses generally were low one or one-and-a-half-storey buildings of heavy timber frame, or *charpente*, construction, an architectural style used throughout New France, including Quebec, Louisbourg, Placentia, and even Louisiana. The wall fill placed between the hand-hewn timber uprights varied, depending on availability.



fig.5

Acadian houses, barns, and church near Fort de Beausejour on the Isthmus of Chignecto, shortly before the Deportation. "View of the French Fort at Beausejour 1755," #C61623. From a copy at the National Archives of Canada, original held at the British Museum, London, England.



fig.6

In 1686, the main settlement at Port-Royal consisted of one-storey wooden houses with enclosed yards and symmetrical gardens, a windmill, church, presbytery and graveyard, as well as English warehouses left over from the 1660s period of English rule. Detail: National Archives of Canada, "PLAN TRES EXACT DV Terrain ou sont scituees les maisons du Port Royal et ou lon peut faire une Ville considerable," #C35567. From a copy held at the National Archives of Canada, original held at the Dépôt des cartes et plans de la Marine, France



fig.7

The one-storey houses and formal kitchen gardens seen on the 1686 plan (Figure 6) are reflected in this model of an Acadian property in a small farm community. The woman seated at the back of the house is processing herbs from the garden. Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull.



fig.8

Acadians drew on the natural environment for construction materials—thatch, locally-made shingles, and boards for the roof, timber for frames, saltmarsh bay and mud for wall fill, and mud for finish of walls and chimneys. Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull.



fig.9

Acadian village model. Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull



fig.10

Acadian village model. Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull



fig.11

Raising the frame of a house in the Port-Royal area. History Collection, Nova Scotia Museum/Artist Azor Vienneau 87.120.1



Reconstructed frame home with stone fill, Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site. Parks Canada

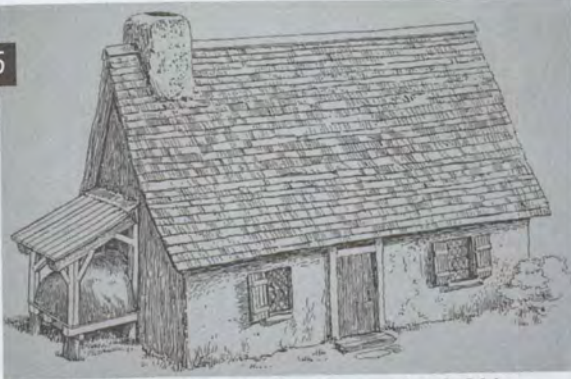
The forests adjacent to the fortress provided vertical log (picquet) wall fill for Louisbourg buildings, as seen in this reconstructed frame building. Parks Canada



fig.12
fig.13
fig.14

An animator in working-class costume opens the shutters of a frame house with log fill, Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site. Parks Canada

fig.15



Conjectural drawing of one of the houses excavated at the Melanson site. Parks Canada/Artist Kevin Sollows

fig.16



Artist's rendering of the house excavated at Belleisle and of the surrounding property. History Collection, Nova Scotia Museum/Artist Azor Vienneau 87.84.3

fig.18



Exterior bakeovens were found in both the Belleisle and Melanson excavations. At Belleisle, the oven may have provided warmth for a pig sty underneath, as it did in late eighteenth-century Acadian house documented at Minudie. History Collection, Nova Scotia Museum/Artist Azor Vienneau 87.120.5

At Port-Royal, the walls of the houses were filled with a mixture of marsh hay and mud. To protect the fill from the elements, an exterior finish was applied, apparently either clay plaster or boards. The roofing varied—some were thatch, others pine shingles or boards (Figures 11, 12, 13, and 14).

In the 1980s, archaeologists carried out excavations at two Acadian settlement sites

in the former Port-Royal area. David Christianson of the Nova Scotia Museum excavated one house and part of another at Belleisle, which took its name from its seigneur, Alexandre Le Borgne de Belleisle, and was the largest single settlement at Port-Royal before the Deportation.⁴ Andrée Crépeau, Parks Canada archaeologist at Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site, excavated one house site, uncovering four different buildings, at the Melanson Settlement.⁵ Both sites are located on the north shore of the Annapolis River, in the former area of Port-Royal, about 16 kilometres apart (Figures 15, 16 and 17).

One of the distinctive architectural features uncovered at Belleisle and the Melanson Settlement was an exterior bakeoven, located at the west end of the house (Figures 18, 19 and 20). Here, the Acadian housewife baked her bread for the family. It is tempting to conclude that bakeovens were a common feature of Acadian houses in Port-Royal. Certainly, there was no known commercial bakery where Acadians could buy bread, as people did in urban centres such as Louisbourg, Quebec City, and Montreal.

The excavations at Belleisle and the Melanson site have increased our knowledge of Acadian material culture. In the past, there was a tendency to consider Acadian life as rather insular and primitive. Robert Hale, a visitor from Massachusetts in 1731, contributed to this misconception by stating that he had seen only two mugs “among all Ye French” and one of them had a chipped rim.⁶ It is doubtful that he can be credited on this point. Ceramics found at Belleisle and the Melanson site came from France, Germany, England, the Mediterranean, and New England. Acadians obtained objects such as these in trade with New England, French colonies such as Louisbourg, and with France. Because there was such a similarity between ceramics excavated at Belleisle and at Louisbourg, it was possible to furnish a conjectural Belleisle kitchen with ceramic

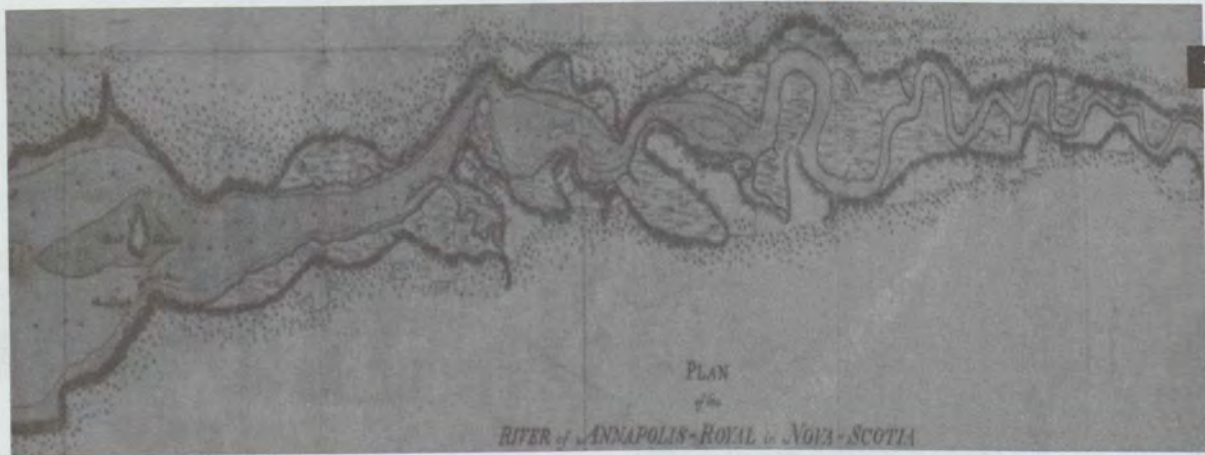


fig.17

Acadian settlement at Port-Royal in 1753. The Melanson settlement was the first one above Goat Island. The Belleisle settlement was built around the large U-shaped marsh, seen above the words "Nova-Scotia." National Archives of Canada, "Plan of the RIVER of ANNAPOLIS-ROYAL in NOVA-SCOTIA. Surveyed in the Year 1733 by Mr. George Mitchell Dep'y Surveyor of the Woods, Corrected and Amended from other Surveys &c 1753" NMC34217/From a copy at the National Archives of Canada, original held at the British Library, London, England



fig.19

A door at the back of the kitchen fireplace gave the Acadian housewife access to the bakeoven built against the end wall of the house. History Collection, Nova Scotia Museum/Artist Azor Vienneau 87.84.17.N-13,739



fig.21

Recreation of the Belleisle kitchen furnished with Louisbourg ceramic reproductions. Photo by Roger Lloyd. Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture, Learning Resources & Technology



fig.20

Recreation of the Belleisle house interior, based on archaeological evidence and comparative information from the period. The girl is carrying a milk pan. History Collection, Nova Scotia Museum/Artist Azor Vienneau 87.120.8



fig.23

Two iron pots and glass cruets with a faience holder from the Grand-Pré area are rare examples of Acadian household goods from a pre-Deportation home. Parks Canada



fig.22

French earthenware cooking pot excavated at the Melanson site. Parks Canada/Landmark Designs Ltd.,



fig.24

Replica of an Acadian kitchen fireplace. Photo by Roger Lloyd. Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture: Learning Resources & Technology

fig.25



In French colonial households, cooking pots were usually suspended from adjustable notched pot hangers, known as crémallières. In Quebec today, pendre la crémallière is a term for a housewarming, dating back to the time when one would hang the pot hanger to begin life in a new home. Photo by Roger Lloyd. Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture: Learning Resources & Technology

and iron reproductions from the Fortress of Louisbourg (Figure 21).

Artifacts give us a tangible link with the Acadian housewife. The round-bottomed French-earthenware cooking pot, or *marmite*, from the Melanson site, shown in Figure 22, probably belonged to Anne Bourg, the wife of Charles Melanson *fils* (Jr.). She would have cooked her family's meals in this pot, placing it directly in the coals of the fireplace or on an iron ring over the coals. Stews were cooked in iron pots such as those uncovered in a farmer's field in the Grand-Pré area (Figure 23). The smaller pot was inside the larger one, along with a set of cruets. For years it was believed that the glass vessels were religious objects from the church, hidden during the Deportation. It is more likely that they were oil and vinegar cruets, a standard item in eighteenth-century French households. Whatever they were, someone in the Acadian community valued them enough to take the trouble to hide them.

Iron pots were among the goods found in a household inventory made at Port-Royal in 1705.⁷ The household goods of Marguerite de Saint-Étienne de La Tour, the widow Plemarais, also included a frying pan, a spit for roasting meat, and a *crémallière*, or notched pot hanger, with which the Acadian

housewife suspended her pots over the fire (Figures 24 and 25). Most of her plates were of pewter, the common material of the period. The household goods included a handworked tablecloth and six handworked napkins. There was also two irons, which came in pairs so that one could be heated while the other one was in use. These household objects give us an idea of the technology available to Acadian women who were noted for their industry, especially as it related to the domestic chores of cooking and making clothing for their large families.

One of the most often asked questions about early Acadian life is "What did Acadians wear?" Unfortunately, we cannot answer this question with certainty because we do not know if Acadian women brought a regional costume with them from France. Until we find evidence to the contrary, we assume that Acadian women wore the 'generic' French costume of the day (Figures 26 and 27). In artwork at Parks Canada and on other projects such as the Azor Vienneau paintings of Belleisle, we have drawn on extensive research on French eighteenth-century female costume done for the animation programme at the Fortress of Louisbourg. Some of the Vienneau paint-



fig.26

Acadians in period costume and others pose in front of the statue of Evangéline during Acadian Days at Grand-Pré National Historic Site. Parks Canada

fig.27



Artist's depiction of Acadians harvesting saltmarsh hay near a dyke. The hay was placed on raised platforms to dry and then used as fodder. Parks Canada/Artist Claude Picard

fig.28



The costumes in this painting of the saltmarsh harvest are based on Louisbourg reproductions worn by actors in the film, *Premières Terres Acadiennes*, which documented the Belleisle archaeological excavations. The project was a part of a co-operative curriculum project of the three Maritime Departments of Education. History Collection, Nova Scotia Museum/Artist Azor Vienneau 87.12.4

fig.29



Acadian actors dressed in Louisbourg reproduction costumes during the filming of *Premières Terres Acadiennes*. Photo by Roger Lloyd. Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture: Learning Resources & Technology

fig.30



Animators in eighteenth-century costume, *Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site*. Parks Canada

fig.31



Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site. Parks Canada

fig.32



Wooden shoes were strong, practical footwear for work both inside and outside of the home. *Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site*. Parks Canada

fig.33



Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site. Parks Canada

ings are actually based on Louisbourg reproduction costumes (Figures 28 and 29).

The everyday dress of the eighteenth-century Acadian women is believed to have been a linen chemise, worn under either a vest or a jacket with a woven wool or linen skirt, often stripped. An apron, neck scarf, and cap would have completed the outfit. No respectable woman of the period would have been seen with her head uncovered. It is possible that different regions of France had a distinctive style of cap. Knit stockings and wooden shoes were worn for everyday wear. Leather shoes were probably worn on occasions such as attending church (Figures 30, 31, 32, and 33)

It is important to note that Acadian costume would have varied according to time period, life style, and occasion. Obviously, styles changed over time especially for elite women. The clothing worn in the 1640s by Jeanne Motin, wife of Governor Charles de Menou d'Aulnay at Port-Royal, would have been very different from the clothing worn by her female descendants at the time of the Deportation in 1755, almost 110 years later (Figure 34). Women from more prosperous families probably owned finer clothing that they wore for special occasions. Acadian wives of some of the early eighteenth-century government officials and officers socialised with the governor and occasionally went to France. Even the average person probably had special clothing for occasions such as weddings and mass (Figures 35 and 36).

French and English observers commented on the skill and industry of Acadian women who, among other things, made their family's clothing. They wove linen shirts from their flax and wove garments and knitted socks, mitts, and hats, using wool from their sheep (Figures 37). Sewing implements were among the artifacts uncovered at the Melanson settlement (Figure 38). The Acadians imported fabric from New England and were said to favour red. One eighteenth-century source, Brook Watson, said



fig.34

Monsieur and Madame d'Aulnay are depicted with three of their children at Port-Royal in the 1640s. The clothing details are drawn from comparative information of the period and a portrait believed to be of d'Aulnay. Parks Canada/Artist Terry MacDonald



fig.35
fig.36

Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site. Parks Canada



Acadian families leaving mass. History Collection, Nova Scotia Museum/Artist Azor Vienneau 87.120.7

that the women cut up and reworked the English scarlet duffel, weaving it into the stripes of their garments.⁸ The use of stripes was in keeping with everyday wear of the



fig.37

Acadian women taught their daughters the skills required to produce warm clothing for the long winter months in Acadia. Photo by Roger Lloyd. Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture: Learning Resources & Technology



fig.38

Remnants of scissors (on left), straight pins, and a thimble excavated at the Melanson settlement site are tangible reminders of the work of the Acadian woman in making and repairing clothing for her family. These items probably belonged to Anne Bourg, wife of Charles Melanson Junior. Parks Canada/Photo Landmark Designs Ltd.

fig.39



Acadian handwoven striped skirt worn by Mme. Marguerite Bellefontaine in Chezzetcook, circa 1850. Recorded as "jupe" by Harry Piers, museum curator. History Collection, Nova Scotia Museum/ Photo by Scott Robson NSM35.13d



fig.40

Acadian print jacket worn by Mme. Marguerite Bellefontaine. Recorded as "mantelet" by Harry Piers. History Collection, Nova Scotia Museum/Photo by Scott Robson NSM35.13c

period. Watson also claimed that they had no dye but black and green.

The tradition of striped skirts continued well into the nineteenth century. Around 1850, Marguerite Bellefontaine, an Acadian, wore a homespun black and white striped skirt and a cotton, flowered-print jacket to attend mass in Chezzetcook, Nova Scotia. Now in the Nova Scotia Museum collection, these garments are the oldest known items of female Acadian clothing (Figures 39 and 40). The Village Historique Acadien in Caraquet has made a reproduction costume based on the original (Figure 41).

The few descriptions of eighteenth-century female Acadian costume are general and come from outsiders, often New Englanders. Robert Hale of Massachusetts described the *Acadiennes* he encountered at Chignecto:

The women here differ as much in yr Cloathing (besides wearing of wooden Shoes) from those in New Engl as they do in Features & Complexion, wc is dark eno' by living in the Smoak in ye Summer to defend ymselves against ye Muskettoes, & in ye winter against ye Cold.... The Gait of ye pple is very different from ye English for the women Step (or rather straddle) further at a step than ye Men. The Women's Cloaths are good eno'. But they look as if they were pitched on with pitchforks, & very often ye Stockings are down about their heels.9

Abijah Willard, a New England officer who had taken part in the 1755 capture of Fort Beausejour, was also struck by the fact that the women wore wooden shoes, a sight that would have been common in France but not in England and New England. When visiting Acadian villages in July 1755, he commented: "I Saw a grate many french women and gorgs their faces Lock well but their feet Looock very Strange with wooden Shoos which they all wore."¹⁰

Clothing was adapted to suit the environment of the colony. During a visit to Chignecto in 1686, the Intendant of New France noted that the Acadians wore Aborigi-

fig.41

This reproduction Acadian costume is based on the nineteenth-century Chezzetcook garments in the Nova Scotia Museum collection. History Collection, Nova Scotia Museum/Photo by Scott Robson



fig.42



These glass beads excavated at the Melanson settlement would have been threaded on a ribbon to form a choker at the neck of a fashionable Acadian woman, probably Anne Bourg. Parks Canada/Photo by Landmark Designs Ltd.

nal-style moccasins which they made themselves.¹¹ Similarly, Dièreville, a visitor to Port-Royal in 1699, stated that, like the Aboriginal peoples, Acadians hunted seals and used seal skin for shoes.¹² The warm, waterproof moccasins were probably worn outside in wet and cold weather. Acadians had adopted other Mi'kmaq and Maliseet items, such as wooden and birchbark canoes. According to a 1692 source, both Acadian men and women were skilled at using the canoe.¹³ Several decades later, Brook Watson commented that furs from bear, beaver, fox, otter, and martin, as well as woolen and linen clothing, gave the Acadians "not only comfortable but in many instances, handsome clothing." Here we see a possible similarity to Quebec, where the climate was even colder than in Acadia and an extensive fur trade flourished.

The artifacts from the Melanson Site include beads (Figure 42). These were not

trading beads but beads worn as jewellery, strung together to form a choker. Chokers were very fashionable in eighteenth-century France and are often seen in paintings of middle class women of the period. Sometimes the choker took the form of a simple black ribbon. It would certainly be surprising if more comfortably-off women did not enjoy certain luxuries. In 1690 several Acadian ladies lodged a complaint against the Abbé Claude Trouvé, parish priest at Beaubassin, because he had refused to grant them absolution after their confessions; he had refused because they wore lace and ribbon.¹⁴ He stated that he expected women and girls coming to confession to wear caps apparently in a style where he could see their eyes. Exactly what was meant is not clear.

Silk lace and blue ribbon were among the

fig.43



In 1692 Acadian trader and ship captain, Abraham Boudrot, imported lace, ribbon, and fabric from Boston along with more practical items such as axe handles and scythe blades. History Collection, Nova Scotia Museum/Artist Azor Vienneau 87.120.3

fig.44



Photo by Roger Lloyd. Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture: Learning Resources & Technology

goods brought to Port-Royal from Boston for sale by Acadian trader, Abraham Boudrot, in 1692 (Figure 43). It is interesting to note that a master tailor, Jean-Baptiste Naquin *dit* l'Étoile, lived in the Port-Royal area from sometime in the 1690s until his death in 1706. Most Acadian women, however, made their own clothing, spinning, weaving, and sewing practical garments to be worn to carry out their many daily tasks (Figure 44).

Most Acadian women expressed their identities in their family roles as wives and mothers. It was rare for an Acadian man or woman to remain single. After the death of a husband or wife, most spouses remarried. The influence of the Church can be seen in the absence of marriages during Lent and Advent. There were also few marriages during spring planting and fall harvest.

In her demographic study of Port-Royal between 1650 and 1755, Gisa Hynes found that, in almost half of the marriages in Port-Royal between 1702 and 1714, one of the partners, usually the husband, had been born elsewhere, often in another part of Acadia, another French colony, or in France.¹⁵ Hynes found that Acadian women married at an earlier age than women in France and had larger families, bearing children regularly up to 40 years of age and over. Where both spouses lived to 45, women marrying before 20 had an average of 10.5 children. Hynes placed the average age of marriage of Port-Royal women at 21, three to four years younger than in France. It is likely that the average age of marriage was even lower in the seventeenth century. A cursory survey of seventeenth-century Port-Royal marriages indicates that brides were usually in their teens. This was certainly the case for the Melanson settlement, one of the family villages at Port-Royal.

The Melanson settlement was established around 1664, after the marriage of 16-year-old Marie Dugas to Charles Melanson, who had been born in England to an English mother and a French Protestant father.

Charles and Marie had 14 children, the first born when she was 16 and the last when she was 45. Eight of the 14 children built homes in the Melanson settlement near their parents but not all at the same time and not all immediately after their marriages. Some daughters married men from other parts of Acadia and left Port-Royal. All of the daughters married young: Françoise was only 14 when she married 16-year-old Jean Sire and moved into his mother's home at Chignecto.

The Melanson settlement was situated on the upland that overlooked the extensive Saint-Charles marsh, now known as the Queen Anne marsh on the Annapolis River. Working in co-operation with the Guilbeaux, their neighbours on the opposite side, the Melansons built the first dyke across the marsh in the 1660s. In the earliest census of Acadia, taken in 1671, the Melansons had 20 *arpents* of 'workable land,' the second largest in Acadia, and the Guilbeaux had 15 *arpents*.¹⁶ With 40 head of cattle, the young Melanson couple also owned the largest herd in the colony. By 1708, a second dyke had been constructed across the marsh, closer to the river, reclaiming more land. Farmers still use this marsh to-day and the Melanson-Guilbeau dykes are still visible.

In 1708 there were five houses in the settlement. Four belonged to members of the Melanson family. Two of the four households were headed by women, both widows, who, unlike most Acadian widows, did not remarry. The houses identified as "Me La Ramee" and "J. Belliveau" belonged, respectively, to the settlement's matriarch, Marie Dugas, and her daughter Madeleine Melanson. Charles Melanson, who sometimes was known as Melanson *dit* La Ramée, had died in about 1700; in the 1701 census, Marie Dugas is listed as a widow with five dependent children, aged between eight and 15, the two eldest being twin boys. Jean Belliveau had died of wounds received during the New England attack on

Port-Royal in September 1707, probably while serving as a member of the Acadian militia. Madeleine, who was about 30 when her husband died, raised her four children in the Melanson Settlement and apparently lived there the rest of her days, never remarrying. Marie Dugas outlived Charles Melanson by 37 years and was approximately 90 when she died.

A third home belonged to another Melanson daughter, Anne, and her second husband, Alexandre Robichaud. In about 1685, at the age of about 16, Anne had married Jacques Saint-Étienne de La Tour and moved to Cape Sable. After his death, she returned to the Melanson settlement with her five children, including Agathe de La Tour, of whom we will hear more later. Anne then married Alexandre Robichaud and had six more daughters. She outlived her second husband, dying at about the age of 86 in 1754, a year before the Deportation.¹⁷

Another house apparently belonged to the eldest son, Charles Melanson Jr. and his wife Anne Bourg, who had grown up in the Bourg settlement a few miles upriver from the Melansons. The couple married in about 1701, approximately a year after his father's death. Charles and Anne had seven surviving children born over a 30-year period, the last when Anne was about 50. Since theirs is the property where archaeological excavations have taken place, it seems likely that the pieces of the bead choker and earthenware cooking pot found there belonged to Anne Bourg.

The Melansons represent a typical Acadian family of complex relationships. Both Charles and his brother Ambroise married daughters from the Bourg family. Three Melanson daughters married Belliveau: Madeleine married Jean Belliveau, her sister Marie married his brother Charles Belliveau, and their older sister Cecile married their father Jean-Antoine Belliveau. With the children of one family often spaced over 20 years or more, relationships became even more complicated

as children from the beginning or end of the family married into different generations. Three generations of one family—Alexandre Robichaud, his uncle Abraham Boudrot, and his nephew and his niece—all married children of Charles Melanson and Marie Dugas.

In addition to raising their children, Acadian women would have participated in



fig.45

Acadians living around the Bay of Fundy constructed weirs to catch fish, taking advantage of the exceptionally high tides. Photo by Roger Lloyd. Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture: Learning Resources & Technology



fig.46

Acadian women probably assisted in the muddy task of removing fish caught in the weir. Photo by Roger Lloyd. Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture: Learning Resources & Technology

the work of the farm. This seems to have been the case in France, where artwork from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries depicts agricultural scenes that consistently show both men and women in the fields, particularly during the harvest. When Colonel Winslow imprisoned the men of Minas in the Grand-Pré church in September of 1755, the women and boys assisted in the harvest (Figures 45 and 46).

The extent of the women's role in the

economic life of Acadia is not known. In 1699, Dièreville stated that the women helped the men in their fishing efforts. Some people feel that Acadian women would also have participated in the heavy work involved in dyke construction and

fig.47



Families in neighbouring Acadian communities worked co-operatively to build and maintain the dykes that reclaimed the rich salt marshes. History Collection, Nova Scotia Museum/Artist Azor Vienneau 87.120.2

repair. This seems doubtful but we simply do not know. (In the late eighteenth century, Acadian women in Louisiana were said to participate in farm work but not in the work on the levees.¹⁸) Widows were heads of households, listed in census records as owners of land and livestock. Wives may have made business transactions in their husband's absence but would have needed their permission to do so (Figure 47).

There are several documentary references to widows selling goods and services. In 1702 or 1703, Louise Guyon, the widow Freneuse, provided meals at her home for artisans who had been brought from France to work on the new fort under construction at Port-Royal.¹⁹ She may have operated her house as an inn. As well, she rented oxen to the government to transport construction materials to the fort. Originally from Quebec, she had been widowed twice, the first time by the age of 18. After her second husband, Mathieu Damours de Freneuse, died, she moved herself and her young children from the St John River to Port-Royal to be near her sister, who was married to another Damours, her late husband's brother. Her efforts to earn a living were aided by the fact that she became the mistress of Simon-Pierre Denys de

Bonaventure, the King's Lieutenant, who was next in rank to the governor.

Madame de Freneuse had lost her second husband in a New England attack on Fort Nashwaak, near present-day Fredericton, in 1696. Magdeline Melanson's husband, Jean Belliveau, from the Melanson settlement, died during a New England attack on Port-Royal in 1707. In pre-conquest Acadia, Anglo-French conflict for imperial domination was a fact of life. Acadia changed hands six times in the seventeenth century. During the War of the Spanish Succession (1702-1713), there were four attacks on Acadia, ending with the 1710 capture of Port-Royal. In the next war, the War of the Austrian Succession (1744-48), expeditions were launched from Louisbourg and Quebec to regain the colony. Acadian husbands and wives shared in the turmoil, finding their homes periodically destroyed and their lives disrupted. Acadians at Port-Royal suffered the most, particularly families living on the approach to the fort.

Acadian women sometimes found themselves to be pawns in the Anglo-French conflict. In the summer of 1704, Benjamin Church led an expedition against Acadia, as retribution for the Deerfield Massacre. The 'massacre' had occurred the previous February when a combined French-Aboriginal force from Quebec attacked the small community of Deerfield, Massachusetts, killing approximately 50 men, women, and children, and marching 112 survivors through the snow to Montreal.²⁰ This attack had nothing to do with the Acadians. Yet, the retaliatory attack was directed at them. In New England minds, French was French and whether it was Acadia or Quebec did not matter. Acadia was weaker and nearer to Boston. Church left Massachusetts with the goal of destroying the settlements of Acadia and of taking prisoners.

Church's vessels arrived at Port-Royal just before sunrise on 2 July 1704. Some of his men landed on the north shore, at Pointe-aux-Chesnes (Oak Point), located just

across the marsh from the Melanson site, and took a woman and four of her children prisoner.²¹ After three days, Church released her, with her nursing baby, but kept the other three children as hostages. He gave her a letter to deliver to the fort, demanding its surrender. She did not deliver the letter personally but passed it on to Pierre LeBlanc, who carried it to the fort. The name of this woman is not known.

Church's men decimated the principal settlements of Acadia, except Port-Royal which was defended by the fort and its garrison. The New Englanders burned houses and crops, killed livestock, and broke dykes at Chignecto, Minas, Cobequid, and Pisiquid. They also took prisoners. Acadian women and children were their prime targets. According to reports carried to officials at Port-Royal, Church had taken approximately 50 Acadians from the settlements on the Bay of Fundy by the time he left at the beginning of August.²² Among them were 11 women and children and one man from Grand-Pré and 21 women and children and nine men from nearby Canard and the Rivière aux Habitants. He had also kidnapped Acadians at Pentagouet and Passamaquoddy on his way along the coast.

Little is known about what happened to these Acadians in Boston. Apparently the prisoners spent at least a year there before being returned to their homes in Acadia. In 1706, Father Durand, parish priest at Port-Royal, baptised two babies born in Boston the previous year and gave the Roman Catholic Church's sanction to two marriages. Jeanne Martin, wife of Gabriel Samson, had given birth to Magdeleine, their first child in January 1705, five months after the prisoners were taken. The baby was baptised at Port-Royal in January 1706, shortly after her first birthday.²³ Father Durand also baptised Louis-Mathieu Doiron, who had been born in Boston, and blessed the marriage of his parents, Marie Henri and Noel Doiron, who had married there. Another couple, Anne Roy and Jean

Clemenceau, also received the Church's sanction for their Boston marriage.²⁴



fig.48

A family leaving church after a baptism, seen in the 1710 model of the fort at Port-Royal. At this time, civilians and the military were sharing the garrison chapel. Fort Anne National Historic Site, Parks Canada



fig.49

A tiny crucifix, holy dove, and a book clasp were among the artifacts excavated in one of the Acadian homes at Belleisle. Photo by David Christianson. Archaeology Collection, Nova Scotia Museum BeDi-2:1755; BeDi-2:5512

Religion was an integral part of Acadian life. In 1676, Father Petit, pastor at Port-Royal, was named the first vicar-general of Acadia. By 1710 most Acadian centres had built modest chapels and churches.²⁵ Acadian men, women, and children within reach of a church attended mass on Sundays and on special feast days. The parish priest performed baptisms, marriages, and funerals (Figures 48 and 49).

Eighteenth-century Acadian congregations may have been segregated, as was the practice in many French churches of the day. In 1773, elderly Acadian parishioners in the church of the Assumption in Louisiana demanded that males and females sit on opposite sides of the church as they had in Acadia in order to stop 'scandalous' conver-

sations between boys and girls during mass.²⁶ Following a pastoral visit to Nova Scotia in 1815, Monseigneur Plessis, Bishop of Quebec, stated that the Abbé Sigogne still insisted that his parishioners in the Baie Sainte Marie area be segregated.²⁷

Mass was a social as well as a religious occasion, a time when people from the scattered settlements of the community gathered together. Women probably took this opportunity to catch up on family news and to indulge in community gossip. Men conducted business before and after mass. Both French and British government officials took advantage of this coming together of Acadians, to communicate orders, by either reading them or posting them at the church door.

Sister Chausson, a nun of the Cross, came to Port-Royal in 1701 to instruct the girls of the colony. Governor Jacques-François de Mombeton de Brouillan solicited aid for her work from the Minister of the Marine and the Bishop of Quebec, who both supported the idea of having a religious community to instruct girls in Acadia, but did not want to provide the necessary funds.²⁸ Sister Chausson seems to have remained in Port-Royal until the capture of 1710.²⁹ Except for this 10-year period and a short period in the first years of Acadie, no formal schooling was available. By the eighteenth century, most Acadians could not read nor write and signed documents with a mark.

Acadian women were noted for their sexual virtue as well as their industry. Illegitimate children were almost unheard of in Acadian families and it was extremely rare for a baby to be born within the first nine months of marriage. Single motherhood was rarer still.

One indiscretion provoked particularly dramatic repercussions. In 1688, an unmarried daughter of "an important family" in Beaubassin became pregnant.³⁰ A local man, 26-year-old Louis Morin, was said to be the father. The local priest, Abbé Trouvé, imprisoned Morin and investigated the situation.

Governor de Meneval banished Louis Morin from Acadia, sending him to France with the suggestion that he would make a good sailor. He never returned. As well, the governor expelled 19 members of Louis Morin's family from Beaubassin, confiscated all of their goods, and gave them to the girl's father. (The 19 did not leave the colony but relocated to the Bay of Chaleur.) This drastic action had an impact on Beaubassin, which two years before had consisted of only about 20 Acadian families.³¹

The Abbé Trouvé had taken the initiative in the case because Acadia was temporarily without a judge. When the new judge, Mathieu de Goutins, arrived in Acadia, he wrote to the Minister of the Marine about the treatment of the Morin family and condemned the priest for his behaviour. He claimed that Trouvé had acted against the Morin family because of their public criticism of his treatment of Louis. The remaining Beaubassin residents were outraged. The priest could not remain at his church at Beaubassin and the residents of Minas also refused to have him, so he moved to Port-Royal.

From 1688 to 1710, de Goutins was responsible for justice. Although he was charged with settling disputes in the colony, he seems to have been more of a watchdog, reporting suspected abuses to the Minister of the Marine, particularly when they related to activities by government officials. The commandant and later governor, Brouillan, claimed that de Goutins lacked objectivity because he was related to half of the population through his marriage to Jeanne Thibodeau of Port-Royal.³²

The birth of an illegitimate child to Louise Guyon, the widow de Freneuse, and Simon-Pierre Denys de Bonaventure, the King's Lieutenant, in 1703 caused a great scandal in Acadia. De Goutins described it as "une affaire qui Cause un Grand desordre et fait genir Les peres and meres par le mauvaise exemple que cela donne à leurs enfants."³³ He also hinted that she had an

abortion the previous year. Even the Bishop of Quebec and the Minister of the Marine became involved. Madame de Freneuse was ordered from the colony and Bonaventure's wife was sent to Port-Royal from France to help restore his reputation. Bonaventure's career did not recover.

Events surrounding this scandal provide one of the two references to *charivaris* in eighteenth-century Acadia. Traditionally, a *charivari* occurred when people arrived, uninvited, at a newly-wed couple's home at night to make a loud noise and to tease the couple.³⁴ It was usually intended as a sign of community disapproval. When Jacques David *dit* Pontif, the garrison surgeon, was overheard in a group talking about the illegitimate birth, de Bonaventure took him into custody, struck him with his walking stick, and imprisoned him for a short time. Not long after, Governor de Brouillan sent some of his employees to Pontif's home on the pretext of having a *charivari* for Pontif, who had recently married Jeanne Saint-Étienne de La Tour from the Melanson settlement. The men did a considerable

amount of damage.³⁵

A good reputation was important to the residents of Acadia. In 1694 one of the most respected women in Acadia, 30-year-old Cécille Landry, had to fight to save her good name. Cécille and her husband, Pierre Theriot, had left Port-Royal around 1681 to become one of the two founding families of Minas (Figure 50). They had no children. Once established at Minas, they opened their home to various nephews from Port-Royal, who stayed with them while constructing homes in the new community. In May 1694, the parish priest, Abbé Buisson de Saint-Cosme, ejected Cécille Landry from Sunday mass, accusing her of having an affair with Jean Terriot, her husband's nephew and her own brother-in-law, while Jean was staying in their home. (Jean Terriot was married to Cécille's sister, Jeanne Landry.) The accusations were based on the word of their employee, La Baume.³⁶

Authorities at Port-Royal ordered La Baume to apologize publicly to Cécille Landry and Jean Theriot and to pay 12 *livres* in damages. When the priest still

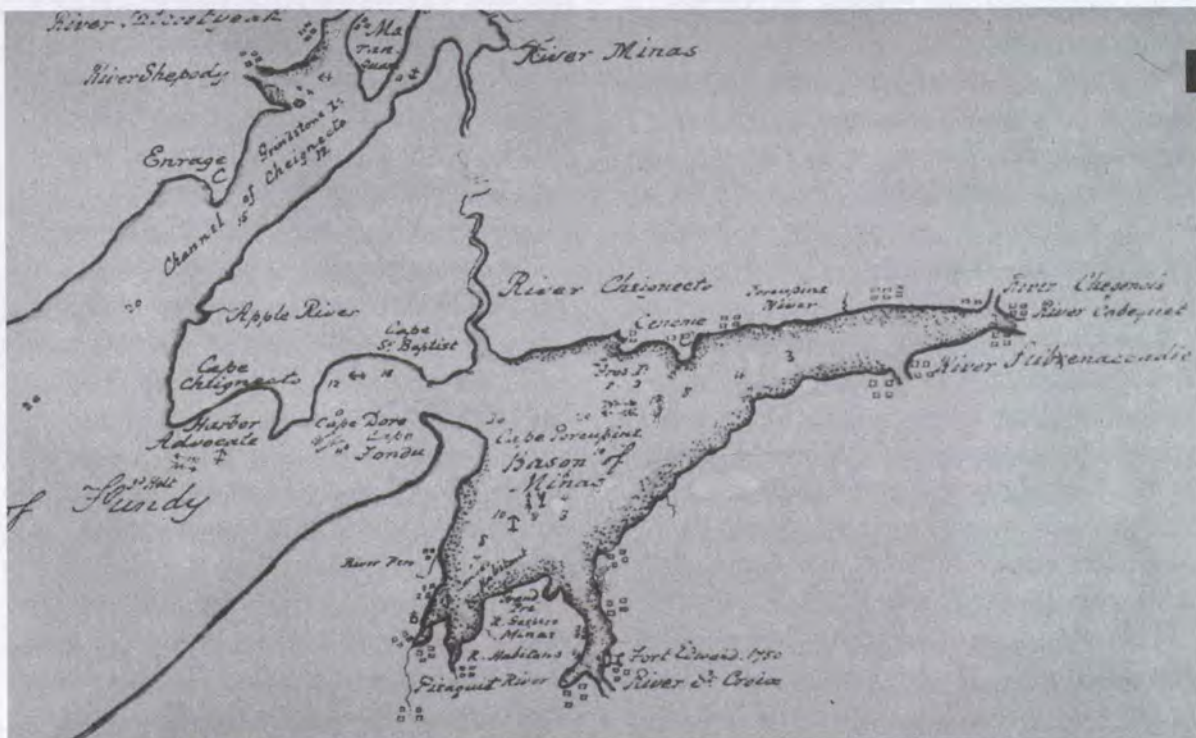


fig. 50

Acadian settlements in the Minas area, 1748. By 1750, an estimated 4750 Acadians were living in the area, including approximately 1350 at Grand-Pré. National Archives of Canada, Detail, "A Draught of the upper part of the Bay of Fundy taken 1748 La colonie acadienne à Port-Royal en 1753. L'établissement Melanson était le premier au-dessus de Goat Island (l'île aux chèvres). L'établissement de Belleisle fut construit autour du marais en forme de U, au-dessus des mots Nova-Scotia. «Plan of the RIVER of ANNAPOLIS- ROYAL in NOVA-SCOTIA. Surveyed in the Year 1733 by Mr. George Mitchell Dep.' Surveyor of the Woods, Corrected and Amended from other Surveys &c 1753» NMC-003417. À partir d'une copie déposée aux Archives nationales du Canada d'un original qui se trouve à la British Library, à y order of the Hon. Paul Mascarene...." H3/205

refused to allow the nephew to attend mass, de Goutins complained to the Minister of the Marine, who in turn wrote to the Bishop of Quebec.³⁷ Pierre Theriot and Cécille Landry were described as people beyond reproach, devoted to the King and the colony. Their home was said to be a refuge of the widows and orphans of the colony, as well as to Theriot's relatives. Cécille Landry's reputation was restored.

Community opinion mattered greatly in Acadia, but behind it was the force of law. The Custom of Paris provided the legal framework for Acadian society. One of a number of legal codes in France, the Custom of Paris was in use in the colonies of New France from the 1660s.³⁸ The code covered aspects of life such as property ownership and inheritance. In the major Acadian communities, notaries drew up legal documents, based on the Custom of Paris. Jean Crisostome Loppinot was Acadia's notary royal, based at Port-Royal. He came to Port-Royal from Paris as a young man in 1700, married Acadian Jeanne Doucet, and remained until 1710, when he and his family went to France, along with the rest of Acadia's civil service and its garrison following the capture of Port-Royal. His records constitute the main body of notarial documents that have survived for Acadia. Because he lost most of his records and household belongings in a fire in 1710, only about 45 of Loppinot's records have survived. They consist primarily of property transactions and marriage contracts.

Land ownership was complicated in Acadia, where at least two systems were in operation in the seventeenth century: land granted by seigneurs and concessions made by the King. In both cases, Acadian women had the right to hold property. Marie de Saint-Étienne de La Tour, the widow of Alexandre Le Borgne de Belleisle, seigneur of Port-Royal, was termed the "*dame de Port Royal*." After Le Borgne's death in 1693, she granted land from his seigneurie, collected rents, and continued to appear first on the list in the census records.³⁹

Sons and daughters shared equally in the inheritance from their parents. Thus, the three daughters and two sons of Charles de Saint-Étienne de La Tour and Jeanne Motin, the widow d'Aulnay, each inherited a one fifth share of their parents' seigneurial rights and property in Acadia. Agathe de La Tour, Charles and Jeanne's granddaughter, managed to obtain (or claimed to have obtained) the rights of all of the La Tour co-heirs which she sold to the British government in 1733. The daughter of Anne Melanson and Jacques de La Tour, Agathe had grown up in the Melanson settlement with her mother and step-father Alexandre Robichaud. Agathe was one of the few Acadians who integrated into the British establishment at Annapolis Royal, marrying two officers in succession.⁴⁰

The right to property applied to everyone, not just seigneurial families. Husbands and wives shared the ownership of property. In the Loppinot records, many land transactions include the husband and wife as co-owners, although this is not seen as consistently as it is in other French colonies. For example, in January 1701, Jean de Labat and his wife, Renée Gautrot, of Port-Royal transferred 10 *arpents* of land to Claude Landry and his wife, Marguerite Teriot.⁴¹ In May 1700, Étienne Pellerin and Jeanne Savoie sold a property to master tailor, Jean Naquin, and his wife, Marguerite Bourg.⁴²

Events surrounding a property owned by Étienne Pellerin and Jeanne Savoie demonstrate the inalienable right of the wife in land ownership. In 1690, Sir William Phips had captured Port-Royal, beginning seven years of nominal English rule and prompting the French to establish a provisional capital on the St John River. With the return of the capital to Port-Royal in 1701, life in the downtown area suddenly changed, as civil servants and others looked for accommodation near the fort. Commandant Brouillan, set his eyes on the *isle aux cochons* (Hog Island), a high point surrounded by salt marsh, with panoramic views up and

down the Dauphin River. This property was owned by 59-year-old Étienne Pellerin and 45-year-old Jeanne Savoie, who had eight children aged between 2 and 22.⁴³ They had purchased the land 15 years before from Jacques Bourgeois, who had been granted it originally by Charles de Menou d'Aulnay in the first years of the colony.⁴⁴ The Pellerin family lived elsewhere, using the *isle aux cochons* for pasture. As well, Pellerin and his neighbours were growing grain on the dyked marshland between the property and the river.

Brouillan forced Pellerin to agree to sell the property. Jeanne Savoie, however, refused to sign the contract of sale. Brouillan, who was noted for his ruthlessness, persevered. He sent soldiers to coerce her and then produced a large bill for improvements to the property (that Brouillan apparently had made himself), threatening to seize all of their furniture, other goods, and livestock if they did not pay. Finally, Brouillan got Germain Bourgeois, son of the previous owner, Jacques Bourgeois, to claim that his father had been mentally unfit because of old age when he sold Pellerin and Savoie the property 15 years before.

After several months, Jeanne Savoie capitulated. Brouillan acquired the *isle aux cochons* and built a home, using government labour and material. This behaviour did not go unnoticed. The Minister of the Marine reprimanded Brouillan for using such violence against the inhabitants. Several years later, officials were still looking into proper compensation for the Pellerins and as far as we know the case was never resolved.⁴⁵ The important point of this case is that no one, not even the colony's highest official, could acquire this property without Jeanne Savoie's agreement as co-owner.

The Custom of Paris made provision for widows, widowers, and their children. Legally, a person was considered a minor until either the age of 25 or the date of his or her marriage. Before marrying, it was customary for a couple to sign a marriage

contract. The document recorded the couple's intention to marry, set out the dowry to be paid by the bride's parents, and established that the couple would have a *communauté des biens* (a community of goods) where their property and goods were held in common and their financial debts and credits were shared. It usually also gave the survivor the right to renounce the *communauté* if the debts outweighed the assets.

After the death of a husband or wife, the *communauté* was divided between the surviving spouse and their children with half going to the spouse and half divided among the children. When minor children were involved, the Custom provided for an election of a guardian by several friends and family members who were considered to have the children's best interests at heart. An inventory and evaluation were supposed to be made after the death, so that there would be no confusion with the next *communauté* when the widow or widower remarried and began another family.

To what extent did Acadians draw up the legal documents required by the Custom of Paris? Since few notarial records have survived, it is difficult to answer this question. There are indications, however, that such records were not that rare, for there are periodic indirect references to them. The earliest French settlers had used marriage contracts in France. For example, in 1636, Perrine Bourg and Jehan Cedre, the first saltmarsh worker (*saulnier*) who came to Acadia to build dykes, signed a marriage contract before sailing from La Rochelle.⁴⁶ Marriage contracts are documented in the colony in the 1680s and 16 marriage contracts are included among Loppinot's surviving papers.

There is a record of the election of a guardian for the children of Jacques St. Étienne de La Tour and Anne Melanson in 1699, when friends and family elected her as the guardian after his death.⁴⁷ (Agathe de La Tour, who later sold the rights to the

British government, was one of the children, aged nine.) In this case, with the La Tour inheritance, there was a lot at stake. Did others bother with this formality? In New France generally, the surviving parent was usually selected as the best guardian anyway. Certainly, in Acadia, census records show minor children consistently with the surviving parent.

The case of one couple, Pierre Breau and Marie Bourgeois, suggests that adherence to the Custom of Paris may have been more commonplace than might be expected.⁴⁸ In 1693, 23-year-old Pierre Breau of Minas married Marie Bourgeois, 16-year-old daughter of Germain Bourgeois. The young couple signed a marriage contract, establishing the usual *communauté des biens* to be inherited by the surviving spouse and children. Five years after the marriage, Germain Bourgeois gave his daughter and son-in-law half of a property, on the condition that they accept it as her share of her future inheritance. The couple accepted and Breau made improvements to the land.

About four years later, Marie Bourgeois died, leaving three young children. Using his influence with de Bonaventure, the King's Lieutenant, Germain Bourgeois forced Breau to give up the guardianship of the children and took them to live with him at his establishment at Beaulieu, on the south shore of the upper Dauphin River. An inventory was taken to ensure the inheritance rights of the children to the *communauté*. Breau protested the loss of the children to Governor de Brouillan. The governor sided with Bourgeois. (After all, this was at the same time that Germain Bourgeois was lying to assist Brouillan in the Pellerin case about Hog Island.) Brouillan ordered Breau to sign a renunciation of the guardianship at the notary's office. Breau ignored the request. De Goutins referred the case to the Minister of the Marine in 1702, which is how we know about it. None of the notarial records, to this point in the story, has survived.

Three years later, in 1705, Breau regained the guardianship of his children. A document signed in Loppinot's office stated that friends and family thought that the children, who were still living with their grandfather Bourgeois, should be in the care of their father.⁴⁹ In other words, this was a formal election of a guardian. The document went on to make arrangements for the children to be paid one half of the rent from a property (probably the land given the couple by Bourgeois in 1698) and a certain amount of wheat and livestock. This arrangement was to continue until they had reached "marrying age," the age of majority. All of this was to ensure that the three Breau children—Anne, Pierre, and Jean—would receive their rightful share of the Breau-Bourgeois *communauté*. With the loose ends of his first marriage finally tied up, Breau remarried, establishing another *communauté* and starting a second family.⁵⁰

The details of the Breau case show that everything had been done in accordance with the Custom of Paris, including a marriage contract in 1693, an inventory after death in 1697, and election of guardian in 1705. All arrangements surrounding inheritance were in observance with the Custom. When force was used to disrupt Breau's guardianship and the prescribed course of law, the attorney general (de Goutins) did not hesitate to refer the matter to the Minister at the palace of Versailles.

In Acadia, as in some of the other colonies of New France, elderly parents sometimes gave their children their inheritance early, on condition that the children care for them for the rest of their days. Governor Perrot of Acadia noted this practice in 1686, adding that, while couples sometimes chose the oldest or the youngest child, they usually selected the child with whom they got along the best. This child was then responsible for paying the dowries for their siblings.⁵¹

One woman who took this option was Jeanne Theriot, widow of Pierre Thibodeau, an important sawmill owner at Pré Ronde (Round Hill) in the Port-Royal area. Pierre

died in December 1704. Two and a half years later, Jeanne Theriot, who was 63, turned over her share of the inheritance from her marriage—salt marshes, woods, livestock, house, mills, and their contents—to two of her sons, Michel and Claude Thibodeau. The document that the three signed in Loppinot's office agreed that her sons would keep her for the rest of her days and set out detailed arrangements for her maintenance. For example, she was to retain two sheep and two ewes for their wool, and a cow for its milk. Her sons were to provide certain things annually for their mother's use, including 10 *aulnes* of fine cloth, three *barriques* of flour, a fattened pig, a side of beef, and two *pots* of brandy. Arrangements were also made for the care of her youngest child, Charles.⁵²

Marriage contracts, succession documents, contracts of sale, and other notarial records continued to be drawn up throughout the British period, probably until the Deportation. When the Council at Annapolis Royal re-appointed Alexandre Bourg as notary in the Minas area in 1740, his Commission acknowledged the continued use of notarial records, stating:

Whereas it is Customary amongst the Inhabitants to make Contracts of marriage and Other Settlements as also for the Parents to Divide and Distribute their Lands and Effects amongst their Children Or Otherways to Dispose thereof by Instruments in Writing . . . (next part of the document is torn)...⁵³

Bourg was ordered to send copies of all notarial records to the governing council at Annapolis Royal to be recorded and used for settling future disputes within families over property ownership.



As wives, mothers, and co-workers, Acadian women formed an important part of Acadian society. They lived within a framework set out by the Custom of Paris and the Catholic Church. The extent to which the Custom was followed is not known, especially outside of Port-Royal, and while they were reputed to be virtuous and industrious, they were living people, like ourselves, with problems and pleasures not unlike our own.

NOTES

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3. The listing in the census of Marie Brun, the only other single woman, seems to have been a mistake. Marie Brun and her unmarried brothers are listed individually after their father, Sébastien Brun, and their married brother, Abraham. This is an exception, for the census does not usually provide the names of children. Marie would have been 17 years old in 1707 and not living in a separate household. Bona Arsenault, *Histoire et Généalogie des Acadiens* Vol. 2 (Quebec: Leméac, 1978), 474, 701

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14. *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, fols. 147-152, 1692
15. Gisa Hynes, "Some Aspects of the Demography of Port Royal, 1650-1755," *Acadiensis* 3, 1 (autumn 1973): 3-17
16. NA, MG1, G1 Vol. 466, No. 8, 1671
17. The parish records give her age as approximately 80 at the time of her death. Nova Scotia Archives and Record Management (hereafter cited as NSARM) MG4, Acadian Parish Records, Reel 3, le 26 sept. 1754
18. Carl A. Brasseaux, "Acadian Life under the Spanish," *Les cahiers de la Société historique acadienne* 10, 3 (sept. 1979): 138
19. NA, MG1, C11A, Vol. 113, fols. 169-195v, "Etat de la depence et paiements faits par Moy Mathieu de Goutin Ecrivain du Roy servant a l'acadie," le 16 nov. 1703
20. John Demos, "The Deerfield Massacre," *American Heritage* (Feb/March 1993): 82-89
21. NA, MG1, DFC. No. d'ordre 24, "Journal de ce qui se passe pendant L'attaque que les anglois de Boston ont faite a la province de l'Acadie" (de Goutins, 1704)
22. C11D, Vol. 5, fols. 8-10v, "Expédition faite par les anglois de la Nouvelle Angleterre au Port Royal, Les Mines et Beaubassin a l'acadie"
23. NSARM, MG4, Reel 2, Baptisms, p. 41, le 27 jan. 1706. The couple had been married at Port-Royal in April 1704
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26. Brasseaux, 139
27. H.R. Casgrain, *Un pèlerinage au pays d'Evangeline* (Québec: L.J. Demers & frère, 1887), 345
28. C11D, Vol. 4, fols. 243v-244, Extrait, de Brouillan, le 21 oct. 1702; *ibid.*, fols. 287v-288, de Brouillan, le 25 nov. 1703; *ibid.*, fol. 318, Extrait, l'Evesque de Quebec (1703)
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30. C11D, Vol. 2, fols. 149v-150, "Memoire Instructif a la Cour des moyens de Conserver L'Acadie au Roy et du prodedd.é que Mrs. Les prestres Missionnaires y ont tenus, 1690"; *ibid.*, fols. 154-154v, le 2 oct. 1690; *ibid.*, fol. 101v, de Meneval, le 10 sept. 1688
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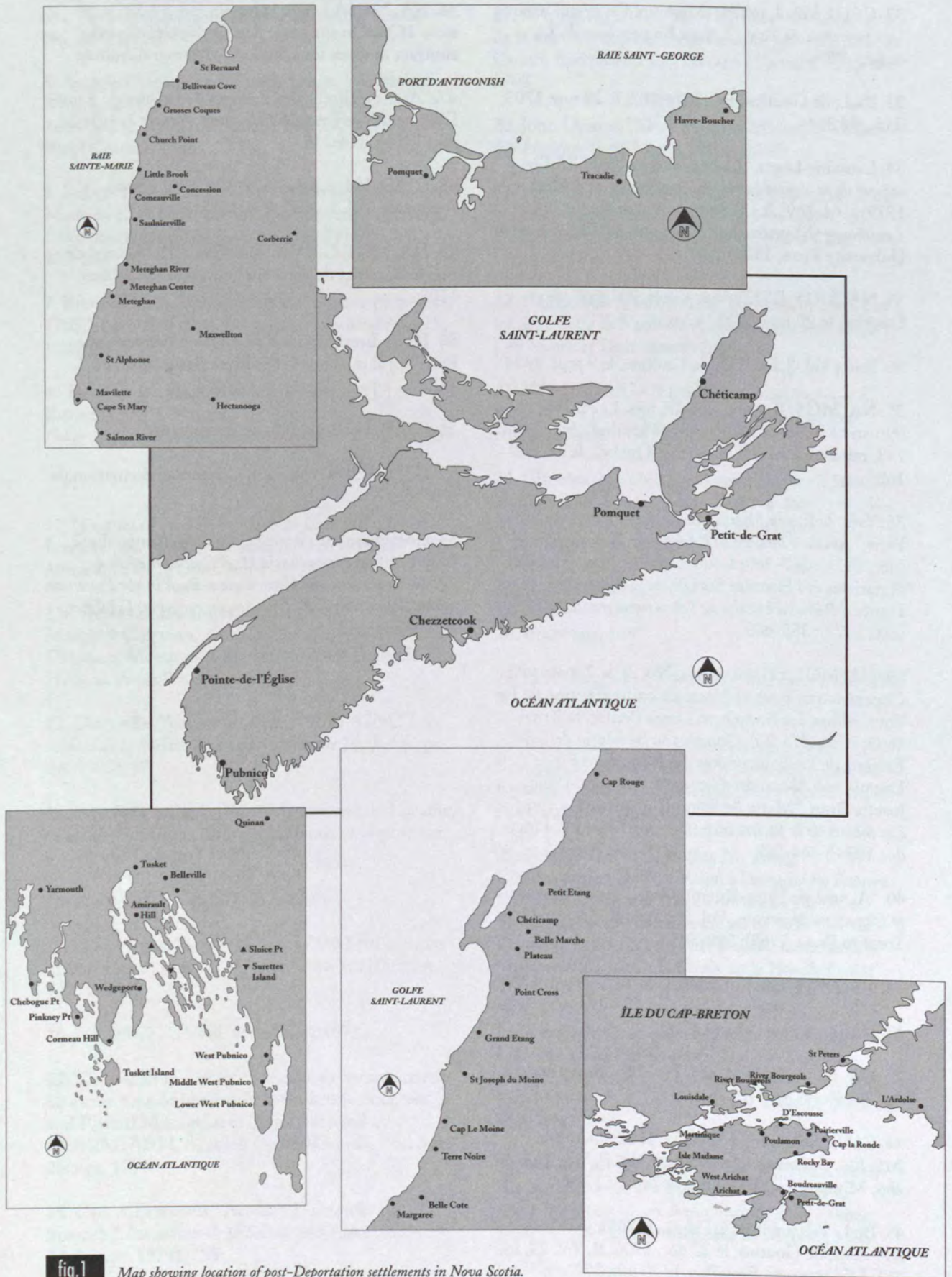


fig. 1 Map showing location of post-Deportation settlements in Nova Scotia.

Rebuilding a Society:

The Challenges Faced by the Acadian Minority in Nova Scotia during the First Century after the Deportation, 1764-1867

Sally Ross

INTRODUCTION

As a general rule, it is said that it takes at least three generations for pioneers to become fully established on the land. The pre-Deportation period of settlement (1636-1755) represents four or five generations of Acadians. However, that society was shattered and dispersed during the turmoil of the Deportation years. An estimated 6,000 Acadians were removed by the British from what is now mainland Nova Scotia in 1755, hundreds more were imprisoned, while others were able to hide or flee to safer locations. Acadians began returning to Nova Scotia in the mid-1760s and continued to arrive in small numbers until the 1820s. They returned as an uprooted and subdued people. Unable to resettle their ancestral farms, they were forced to start clearing the land and rebuilding all over again in distant corners of the province (Figure 1).

In order to grasp the time scale of the rebuilding of the Acadian society after the Deportation, it is important to think of the process in human terms. To this end, I try to keep in mind two individuals in particular. The first of these "human milestones" is Hubert Girroir who was born in 1825 in Tracadie, Antigonish County. Ordained in Quebec City in 1853, he became the first Nova Scotia-born Acadian priest—seventy years after the first Girroirs arrived in Tracadie.¹ Father Girroir played a major role in the promotion and development of French-language education in eastern Nova Scotia. The second individual is Édouard Alfred LeBlanc,² the first native son of

Clare to become a priest. He was ordained in 1897 in Halifax, 129 years after the first Acadians were granted land along St. Mary's Bay. In 1912, he was ordained Bishop of Saint John and as such became the first Acadian bishop in the Maritimes and a key figure in the Acadianization of the Roman Catholic Church. The careers of these men are obviously very significant with regard to the advancement of the Acadian people, but they are also revealing with regard to the length of time it took for educated leaders to emerge from the Acadian communities of Nova Scotia. This article is an attempt to explain the complexities of the rebuilding process faced by the Acadian minority. It is also a tribute to the courage and perseverance of a people.

A secondary aim of this article is to illustrate the rebuilding process by means of photographs of real people, real buildings, and real documents. From the outset, I knew that this would be a very difficult task since photography was only invented in 1839. In the early days of photography in Nova Scotia, most photographers specialized in portraits which they took in their studios.³ As a rule, this implied a clientele with a disposable income — a rare phenomenon in the case of the majority of Acadians in the mid-1800s. Considerable research remains to be done to discover when the first studios were established in the Acadian areas of Nova Scotia; where Acadians first went to have their pictures taken; and the identity of the first photographers to travel

to isolated Acadian communities with their bulky cameras, tripods, glass negatives, and other paraphernalia.⁴

Not having access to a private collection of early Acadian photos, I was forced to rely on resources in the public domain. Partly due to the ethnocentricity of the majority culture, there is very little nineteenth-century Acadian photographic material available in public institutions such as the Nova Scotia Museum and the Nova Scotia Archives. To give but one example: the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic has a collection of over 20,000 photographs but only about six of them relate to the Acadian areas of the province—despite the enormous role Acadians have played in the fisheries and in shipbuilding. The Centre acadien at the Université Sainte-Anne has a small collection of photographs pertaining to the St. Mary's Bay region but there is relatively little material from the 1800s. The public collection with the largest number of photographs on and by Acadians is that of the Argyle Township Court House and Archives, located in Tusket. It was in this computerized collection of approximately 5,000 photographs, established in the early 1990s, that I found many of the illustrations used in this article.



*Wooden cross memorial at French Cross Point near Morden.
Photo by Rebecca Spurr, circa 1900*

AFTER THE DEPORTATION: *taking ownership of the land*

I have identified five major areas that created barriers for Acadians attempting to rebuild after the Deportation: land, religion, language, education, and political power (local and provincial). All of these aspects of community life are inextricably linked and all of them take on regional nuances. Obviously the Acadians themselves did not regard either their religion or their language as obstacles. However, once they moved outside their own communities—whether for legal, economic, or political reasons—Roman Catholicism and the French language became barriers.

Although Grand-Pré has become the symbol of the Deportation of the Acadians, there are many other sites in Nova Scotia that bear witness to that tragic period. Three photographs that show lesser known, but very significant, locations in Nova Scotia take us back to 1755. The first is a photo (Figure 2) taken around 1900 at French Cross Point, near Morden (Kings County). In the fall of 1755, about 60 Acadians fled the Belleisle marsh area in the Annapolis Valley. They travelled overland and reached the Bay of Fundy as winter was setting in. Because of the time of year, they were forced to take shelter near this spot for five months. Many of them perished. In March, the survivors crossed the Bay of Fundy and reached what is now known as Refugee Cove on the Parrsboro shore. A cross was put up in memory of those who did not survive that winter. In 1887 a second wooden cross (the one shown in Figure 2) was erected by the people of Morden. Erosion eventually took its toll, so a stone and concrete cross was built in 1920 and a plaque installed by the provincial government in 1964. The place name, French Cross Point, and the monument serve as permanent reminders in a non-Acadian part of the province of one small, but typical, chapter in the long and complex history of the Deportation.

The next illustration (Figure 3) shows the oldest cemetery in St. Mary's Bay. It is located on Pointe-à-Major, the point of land that forms the southern tip of Belliveau's Cove.⁵ In 1755, Pierre Belliveau along with 120 other Acadians fled Port-Royal and overwintered near this spot. Wooden crosses mark the graves of some of the refugees who perished during that winter. There is also a small commemorative chapel maintained by the local historical society. The third photo (Figure 4) gives a view of the Pointe-à-Major beach next to the little cemetery. Although beautiful, this vast expanse of beach stones provides a sharp contrast to the lush marshlands the Acadians were forced to abandon in 1755.

Acadians were granted land along the shores of St. Mary's Bay by Lieutenant-Governor Michael Francklin in 1768—more than a decade after the refugees had taken shelter near this beach. The first Acadians to settle in the region known as Clare were Joseph Dugas and Marie-Josephe Robichaud, the daughter of one of the men who had overwintered on Pointe-à-Major in 1755-1756. The place name Pointe-à-Major refers to Major Anselme Doucet who inherited this point of land from his father Pierre Doucet who returned from exile in Massachusetts in 1775.⁶ Captain or Major Anselme Doucet (1781-1861) was thus a member of the first generation of Acadians born in St. Mary's Bay. He founded a successful lumber business and occupied a prominent position in the Nova Scotia militia. Anselme Doucet is regarded as a distinguished ancestor and one of the early heroes to whom the Acadians of Clare could look for guidance.⁷ In a province dotted with place names honouring the officials who deported the Acadians, Pointe-à-Major is emblematic because it validates the life of a local Acadian hero. The capacity and the right to name geographical locations based on one's own heritage constitutes a major step in cultural recovery.

The most obvious consequence of the



fig.3

Oldest Acadian Cemetery at Pointe-à-Major in St. Mary's Bay. Photo by Sally Ross, 1996

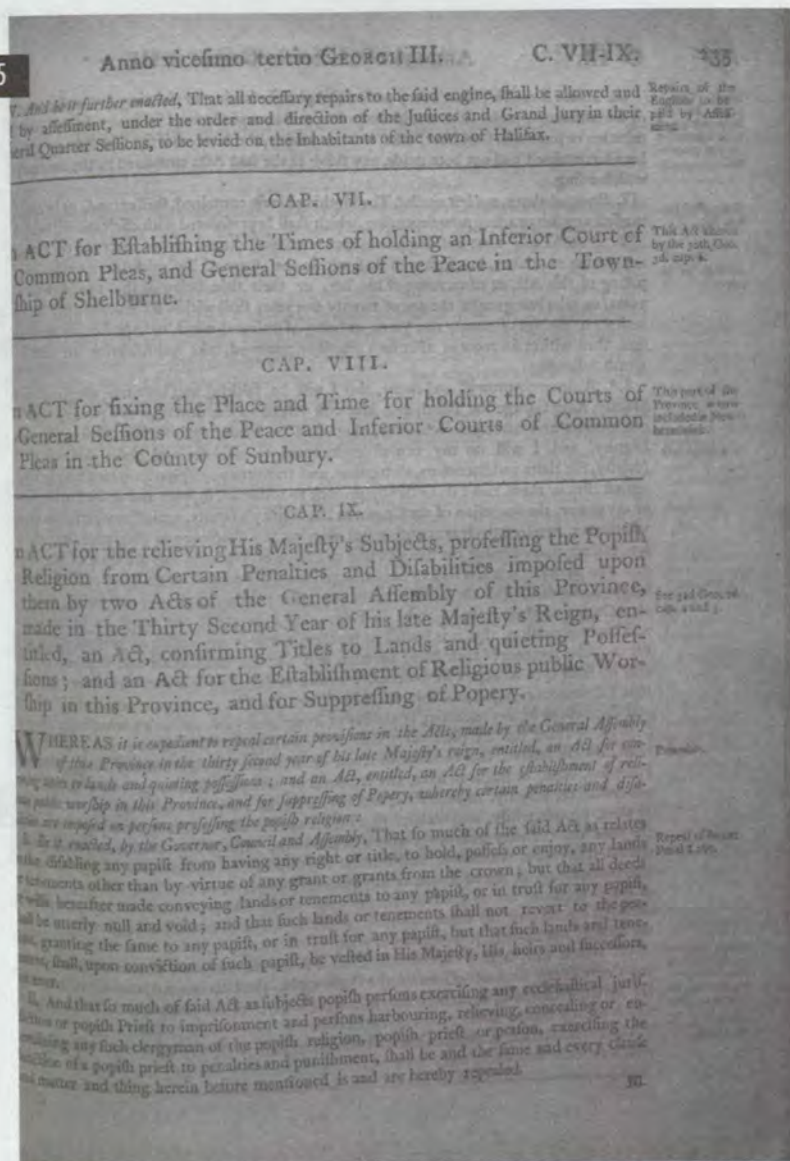


fig.4

Cobble beach at Pointe-à-Major. Photo by Sally Ross, 1996

Deportation was that the Acadians lost the most fertile lands in Nova Scotia, lands which, in the case of Port-Royal, they had been farming since 1636. As a people they were literally up-rooted. Other groups of settlers who arrived after 1755, particularly the New England Planters and the Loyalists, were given a significant and valuable head-start when they were granted lands formerly dyked and farmed by three or four generations of Acadians.

The second most obvious consequence of the Deportation was that the Acadians were forced to settle in distant corners of mainland Nova Scotia and Cape Breton. Despite the fact that Britain and France had signed a peace treaty in 1763, the British still considered the Acadians a security risk.⁸ They were allowed to return to Nova Scotia, but they were not allowed to settle in one geographical location. In the eyes of the colonial authorities, the more scattered the Acadians were, the less dangerous they would be.



1783 Law permitting Roman Catholics to own land and worship in public. Nova Scotia Laws (1758-1804), 235. Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management J104

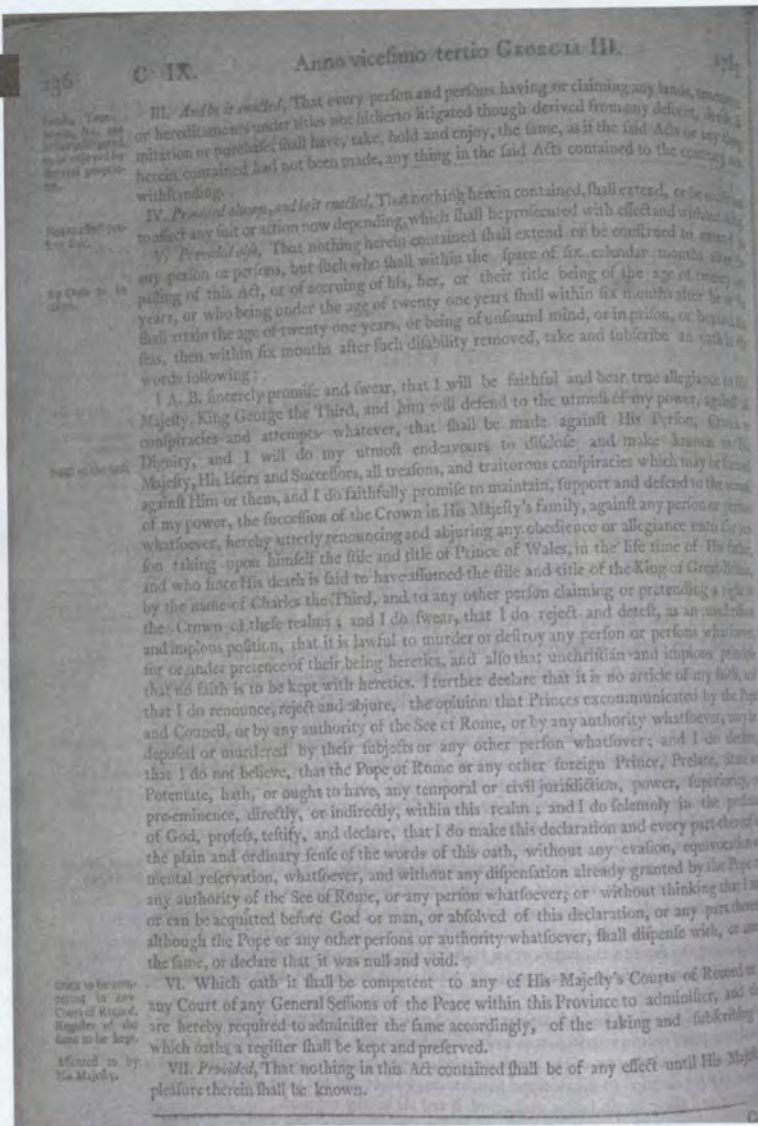
In addition to being defeated and uprooted, Acadians were victims of religious intolerance. British Nova Scotia began as a Protestant colony with a definite bias toward the Established Church of England. However, with the arrival of the so-called "Foreign Protestants" from Germany, Switzerland, and Montbéliard in the 1750s, the Planters in the 1760s, and the Loyalists in the 1770s and 1780s, the Protestant fabric of the colony gradually became much more complex. Nevertheless, Catholics, who were officially referred to as "Popish persons," were not allowed to own land, hold public office, or establish schools. One of the

conditions of land grants in Nova Scotia stipulated that grantees had to settle the land with Protestants. For purely practical reasons, however, authorities in Nova Scotia soon found themselves obliged to soften their position with regard to Catholic settlers. After all, a colony with no settlers was much more vulnerable. Moreover, it was much cheaper to use experienced and available Catholic settlers (i.e., Acadians) than to import people from Great Britain. The first official step in the long process of the legal emancipation of Catholics in Nova Scotia came in 1783 when a law was passed allowing Catholics to own land and worship in public (Figures 5 and 6). It should be noted, however, that exceptions had been made for Acadians as early as 1768. As we have seen, a large section of the province along St. Mary's Bay was specifically designated for Acadians.

Elsewhere, resettlement was more haphazard. In Cape Breton, which was made a separate colony in 1784, it followed the development of the fisheries (Figures 7 and 8). The Jersey merchants who established operations in Inverness and Richmond counties obtained the prime waterfrontage in the best harbours and the most useful islands for their fishing stations (Figures 9 and 10).⁹

Many settlers in Cape Breton were given licences of occupation instead of land grants. Fulfilling one's obligations proved difficult for the typically impoverished Acadian family, as can be seen in two letters written in D'Escousse (Isle Madame) in 1808 to

fig.6



1783 Law permitting Catholics to own land and worship in public. Nova Scotia Laws (1758-1804), 236. Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management J104

Clément Hubert, the first Justice of the Peace in Arichat, a powerful Jersey fish merchant, and one of the founding members of St. John's Anglican Church.¹⁰ These documents are particularly interesting not only because they are rare examples of official requests written in French but also because they provide significant details pertaining to Acadian families living on Isle Madame in the early 1800s. The first letter was written on behalf of Agnès Cloris, the wife of Nicholas Petitpas (Figure 11).¹¹ Translated literally, her letter reads as follows:

Monsieur Hubert

It is you whom I address to speak on my behalf, since my husband Nicholas Petitpas is out fishing and is therefore unable to go in person to obtain the lot of land that the engineer Mr. Hégen¹² measured for us and for which he was paid without having provided the plan of the lot No. 28 which goes from Grandigue to the village of Descousse. We are a family of nine with seven children. The oldest is nineteen and the youngest is five. We would request that we be granted two years in which to make our payments. Your humble and obedient servant, Agnès Cloris, wife of Nicholas Petitpas.

Descousse, 15 August 1808

The second letter was written on behalf of Anastasie Poirier, the widow of Pierre Poirier. It is obvious from the following request

fig.7



Acadian fishermen on board schooner. Photo by Eugène Meuse, circa 1905. Argyle Township Court House and Archives, P1995: 317

fig.8



Father Pierre Fiset's wharf and fish houses in Chéticamp, circa 1900. History Collection, Nova Scotia Museum. NSM Z3969, page 28, Copy negative N-18,207.

fig.9



Two fishermen in Grand-Étang, near Chéticamp, circa 1938. Photo by Clara Dennis. Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management, Album 43 #11

fig.10



Arichat front harbour, circa 1938. Photo by Clara Dennis. Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management, Album 43 #321

(Figure 12) that Madame Poirier had not been able to pay her rent or make any of the compulsory improvements to her land.

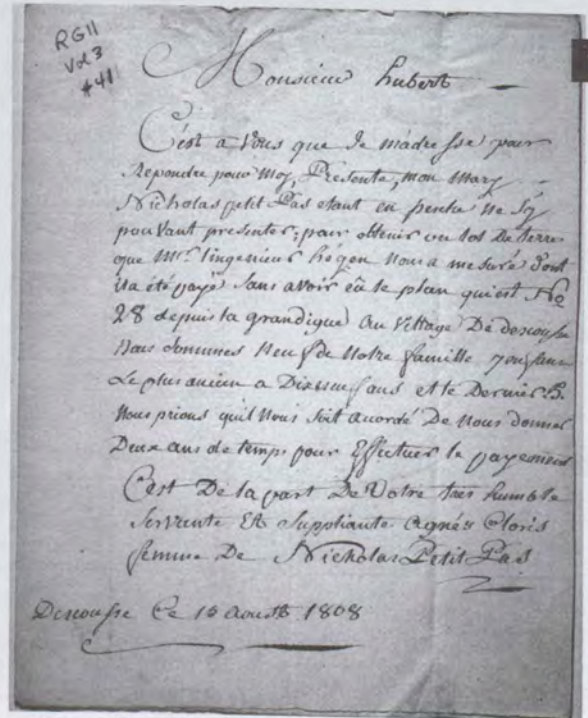
Monsieur Hubert,

Anastasie Bonain,¹³ widow of Pierre Poirier, her late husband, is living in Descousse on the lot measured recently by Mr. Jean Jean¹⁴ which has remained in the same state for the past two years. She is responsible for ten children: four boys, the oldest of whom is aged twelve years and the youngest aged six years, and six girls, the oldest being sixteen years and the youngest being two. She requests very humbly that her

poverty and her circumstances be explained and that she be granted the work that her husband left her for the upkeep of her family and the time to fulfil the necessary payment. You would be rendering a very great service to a poor widow and her orphans. It is with respect and submission that I am, Sir, your very humble servant,

*Anastasie Poirier, widow
Descousse, 15 August 1808*

fig.11



Letter to Clément Hubert from the wife of Nicholas Petitpas, 1808. Nova Scotia Archives and Record Management, RG 11, vol. 3 #41

Other Acadians on Isle Madame were more fortunate. In 1768, for example, Lieutenant-Governor Francklin identified seven men living in Petit-de-Grat who, in recognition for their loyalty to the British, were eligible for titles to the land they were occupying and that they had improved. The men in question were: Charles Fougère, Charles Dugas, Louis Boudreau, Joseph Boudreau, Peter Fougère, Joseph Gaudin, and John Peters (Pierre). Two photos, taken in the 1930s, show the tiny fishing community of Little Anse located just past Petit-de-Grat. (Figures 13 and 14)

fig.12

RG11
Vol 3
#412

Monieur Hubert

Public Archives of Nova Scotia
HALIFAX, N.S.

Anastasia Bonain veuve De pierre jorin
son feu mary, demourant a Des Coteaux en l'isle
Santiam Major. Domiciliement a M^r Jean Jean
Et vint ainsi. Depuis deux ans dans let état
chargé de dix enfants; quatre garçons les plus
vieux ont agé de deux ans, et les plus jeunes de six
et les plus vieux ont agé de six ans.
Et de plus deux ans.

Après très humblement de représenter la
pauvreté et la situation et qu'il lui soit accordé
le travail que son mary lui a laissé pour la
soutien de sa famille et de temps de pouvoir
satisfaisra au paiement qui appartient
vous rendre service très grand a vous possible
Voues et, en même honneur. D'ice elle
Respect et soumission

Votre servante très humble
Anastasia Poirier veuve
Doravault le 15^e août 1808

Letter to Clement Hubert from Anastasia Poirier, 1808.
Nova Scotia Archives and Record Management, RG 11, vol. 3 #42

At the opposite end of the province, in Argyle, other Acadians eventually obtained land, but they were first obliged to settle as tenants on large tracts of land given to British military officers or members of the Church of England in various parts of the province. Captain Ranald MacKinnon of the Montgomery Highlanders and the Reverend John Breynton, rector of St. Paul's Church in Halifax, both received two thousand acres of land in the region of Sainte-Anne-du-Ruisseau in Argyle.¹⁵ Like all recipients of land grants, these men were obliged to make improvements to their land within a specified period of time. It was undoubtedly more practical to lease the land to eager and hard-working Acadians than to import settlers from Britain. In 1773, Breynton leased land to Pierre Surette, Pierre LeBlanc, Pierre Muise, and Louis Muise. Two years later, Captain MacKinnon leased, and later sold, land to Dominique Pothier, Paul Surette, Pierre Surette, and Joseph Babin.

The community of Larry's River on the shores of Tor Bay in Guysborough County was settled by Acadians who were forced to

leave the Chezzetcook area in the late 1700s because they were unable to obtain titles to their land after the arrival of Loyalists. That is why so many of the family names typical of Chezzetcook can be found in Larry's River, Charles Cove, and Port Felix (eg., Bellefontaine, Manette, Bonnevie, Petitpas). (Figure 15)



fig.13

Fishing village of Little Anse, frequented, like Petit-de-Grat, by French, Acadian, and Basque fishermen in the early 1700s. Photo by Clara Dennis, circa 1938. Nova Scotia Archives and Record Management, Album 43, Section XIX #425



fig.14

Fisherman's house and barn in Little Anse. Skeins of wool are hung to dry on the fence. Photo by Clara Dennis, circa 1938. Nova Scotia Archives and Record Management, Album 43, Section XIX #430



fig.15

Crossing the foot bridge in Larry's River, circa 1938. This bridge was destroyed in a hurricane in 1977 and replaced by a far less spectacular structure. Photo by Clara Dennis. Nova Scotia Archives and Record Management, Album 43

STRUCTURES OF POWER: *a marginalized minority*

From 1758 to 1879, local government at the county and township level was carried out by non-elective bodies known as the Commission of the Peace or the Court of Sessions that met twice a year. The Courts of Sessions were composed of Justices of the Peace, chosen and appointed by the Governor and Council in Halifax. In other words, government at the county level was merely an extension of the central power in Halifax.¹⁶ For over a century, the position of Justice of the Peace opened the door to both power and prestige. The Justices of the Peace served both a judicial and administrative role which included seeing that laws were obeyed and appointing all the county officials from customs inspectors to school trustees. Consequently, these men were conveniently placed on the social ladder to ensure that they were surrounded by like-minded individuals and that their sons and friends obtained the most interesting and lucrative jobs. In simple terms, one could say that the Justices of the Peace represented the quintessential “old boys network.”

Aside from being regarded as a highly respectable and trustworthy man, a Justice of the Peace had to be literate in the English language, since all the official correspondence and laws of the province were in English. Acadians who had spent a decade exiled in the American colonies might have learned some spoken English, but very few received any formal schooling. Many Acadians who settled in Cape Breton after the Deportation had lived as refugees in France for nearly thirty years. Their knowledge of English would be even more limited.

Until the early 1800s very, very few Catholics were chosen to become members of this prestigious circle of men. Necessary exceptions were made, however, since it was important that order be kept at the local level. It was for this reason, no doubt, that B noni d’Entremont was appointed Justice of the Peace in the township of Argyle in 1792. His aristocratic lineage and his connections with the Mi’kmaq served him well in the eyes of the British authorities. B noni d’Entremont thus became the first Acadian Justice of the Peace in the Maritimes. He died in 1810. Amable Doucet in the township of Clare was appointed Justice of Peace in 1793 and held this position until his death in 1806. With the exception of these two men and Father Jean-Mand  Sigogne,¹⁷ the French  migr  priest who served the parishes of Sainte-Anne-du-Ruisseau and



fig. 16

LeNoir Forge, Arichat, Cape Breton. Photo by Nova Scotia Department of Tourism



fig. 17

Detail of the plaque at the LeNoir Forge in Arichat. Photo by Nova Scotia Department of Tourism

St. Mary's Bay from 1799 to 1840, it was really not until the late 1830s and 1840s that Clare and Argyle began to see the occasional Acadian appointed to the Court of Sessions.

Despite the fact that Acadians formed over 50 percent of the population of Richmond County, there were no Acadian Justices of the Peace in Cape Breton before Honoré Martel's appointment in 1837. Thomas LeNoir, a prominent blacksmith born in France, was appointed Justice of the Peace in 1841—45 years after he left the Island of Miquelon to settle on Isle Madame with his Acadian wife. Thomas LeNoir was the second Justice of the Peace chosen from the Acadian community. His stone forge is one of the oldest buildings in Arichat (Figures 16 and 17). The first Acadian Justices of the Peace in Inverness County were not appointed until 1871. They were Joseph LeBlanc from Margaree and Severin Aucoin from Chéticamp.¹⁸ Thus, for all intents and purposes, Acadians were excluded from the structures of local government for almost 75 years—from 1764 to 1837. Given the economic and political role of the Justices of the Peace, this exclusion constituted a significant handicap that had far-reaching consequences.

In the same way that the arrival of the Planters and the Loyalists had affected the stranglehold of the Anglicans over the positions of power in the late 1700s, the re-annexation of Cape Breton Island to mainland Nova Scotia in 1820 had major consequences on the political scene. Because the vast majority of the settlers on the island were Catholics (Scots, Acadians, and Irish),¹⁹ the government was forced to repeal the Test Oath so that Catholics could hold public office.²⁰ The right to vote also had to be extended beyond landowners (known as freeholders), since over 50 percent of the occupied land in Cape Breton was in leasehold tenure (i.e., occupied by leaseholders). The two representatives for Cape Breton Island elected in 1820 were both Irish, but

one, Richard J. Uniacke, Jr. of Halifax, was Protestant and the other, Laurence Kavanagh, Jr. of St. Peters, was Catholic.²¹

The wealthy fish merchant Laurence Kavanagh thus became the first Catholic elected to the Nova Scotia Legislature. He was not able to take his seat until 1823, after a resolution had been passed allowing him to sit without taking the Test Oath which would have meant renouncing his faith. Thanks to the influence of Thomas Chandler Haliburton, and indirectly of Father Sigogne, the Test Oath was officially abolished in Nova Scotia in 1827.



fig. 18 *Simon d'Entremont, circa 1880.*
Musée Acadienne de Pubnico-Ouest.

Almost a decade later, in 1836, the year Argyle Township was created, Simon d'Entremont from East Pubnico successfully ran for a seat in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly (Figure 18). Born in 1788 in West Pubnico, Simon was the son of Bénoni d'Entremont and Anne Marguerite Pothier. His father, Bénoni, had been deported to Massachusetts in 1756 and returned to Nova Scotia with his family in 1766. He received large land grants in both East and West Pubnico but settled in West Pubnico

in 1767. Simon inherited his father's land in East Pubnico. It would appear that Simon had no formal education, but that he spoke and read French, English, Mi'kmaq, and Latin.

In 1836, Simon d'Entremont became the first Acadian in the Maritimes to sit in a Legislative Assembly. At the same time, Frédéric Armand Robichaud (of Corberrie, Clare) was elected to represent Annapolis County, but due to illness he did not take his seat until 1838.²² Simon was not re-elected in 1840 and was the only Acadian MLA from Argyle before Confederation. Until recently, Acadian representation from Argyle has been very sporadic, mainly due to electoral boundary divisions which split the Acadian minority. In 1984, the large riding of Yarmouth was restructured in such a way as to almost guarantee the presence of an Acadian MLA from Argyle.

Acadian representation from Cape Breton has been even more tenuous. Despite the fact that Acadians have always formed the ethnic majority in Richmond County, only ten have been elected to the House since 1840. On only two brief occasions have Acadians from Chéticamp been able to break through the overwhelming Scottish majority in Inverness County to be represented in the Legislative Assembly. Moïse Doucette held a seat from 1897 to 1906 and

Hubert Aucoin from 1925 to 1928. Since Frédéric Armand Robichaud took office in 1838, there has always been an Acadian from Clare in the provincial legislature, except for a brief period of three years (1917-1920). This continuous presence has given the Acadians of St. Mary's Bay a political strength and recognition which none of the other Acadian regions in Nova Scotia have ever been able to attain.

As the foregoing discussion indicates, the Acadians were doubly excluded from Nova Scotia provincial politics. As Catholics, they were pushed aside for religious reasons for 60 years and then the geographical legacy of the Deportation left them with infrequent representation. In the final analysis, except in the case of Clare, democracy based on majority rule has not favoured political representation of the Acadians.²³ If ethnic or cultural groups are put in a minority situation in any electoral division — municipal, provincial, or federal — then the likelihood of their having a voice in the “democratic” system is greatly reduced. Indeed, it is only in recent years that the right to political representation of minorities has been given any real consideration by members of the majority culture. The following comment made in 1957 by J. Murray Beck, one of Nova Scotia's most respected political scientists, reflects the traditional view re-

fig.19

Wedgeport's first mayor and town council, 1911. Mayor: Jacques R. LeBlanc; Councillors: Forman Pothier, Gilbert Cottreau, Constant Doucet, Émilien LeBlanc, Ben Cottreau, and Jacques Boudreau; Treasurer: Anselme Odilon Pothier, the bearded gentleman on the far right. Argyle Township Court House and Archives, P199 2: 79



garding population-based majority rule:

*The one racial minority—the French Acadian—normally has no special viewpoint upon the major public issues and in any case, its interests were adequately protected by the Acadian minister without portfolio who was included in all ministries between 1896 and 1948.*²⁴

Apart from dismissing the Black and Mi'kmaq minorities completely, this simplistic analysis assumes that all Acadians, irrespective of their geographic location, share the same political objectives and that a politician from Clare would or could speak for the Acadians in Chéticamp.

The first Town Council of Wedgeport offers an interesting exception to the general political marginalization of the Acadians (Figure 19). Because of the booming economy spearheaded by the Pothier Brothers' enterprise (officially known as J.H. Porter and Co.), Tusket Wedge was incorporated as a town in 1910 under the name of Wedgeport. All of the members of the first Council, including the mayor, were Acadian. In this case, it seems apparent that money and success helped break down ethnic and religious barriers. Unfortunately the political status of the new town was short-lived. In 1947, as a result of a collapsing economy, the council disappeared when the town as an incorporated body was dissolved.²⁵

Anselme O. Pothier (1839-1932) served as the second Warden of the Municipality of Argyle from 1899 to 1901 (Figure 20). He was a member of the second generation of Pothiers born in Tusket Wedge (Wedgeport). Sylvain Pothier and Charles-Amand Pothier (Anselme's grandfather) moved from the Sainte-Anne-du-Ruisseau area to Tusket Wedge in the late 1770s.²⁶ The careers of these Pothier men and their off-spring reflect the bustling economy of Argyle in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Figures 21, 22, and 23).



fig.20

Anselme Odilon Pothier (1848-1932), also shown in Figure 19. He was the bookkeeper and one of the owners of the famous J.H. Porter & Co. Argyle Township Court House and Archives, P1989: 328

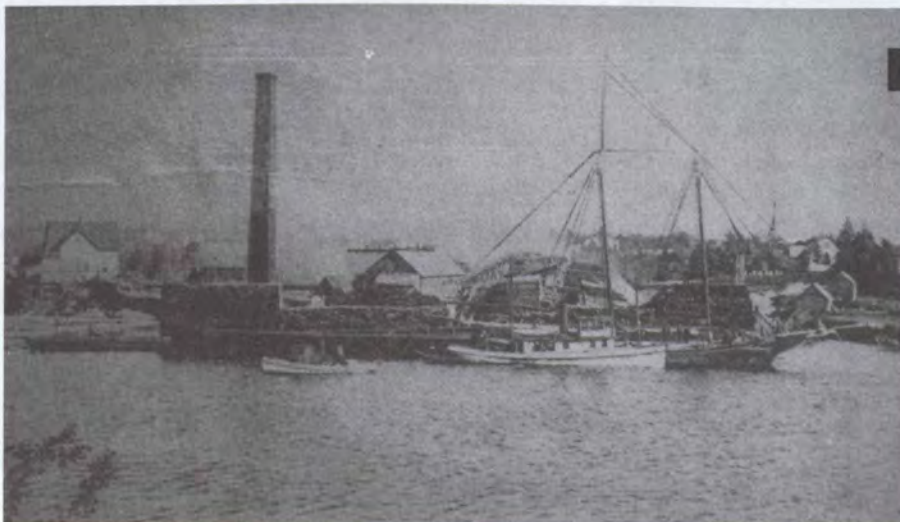


fig.23

Sailing ship being loaded with lumber at the Tusket lumber mill around 1905. Wedgeport Tuna Museum.

fig.21



The brigantine Boston Marine unloading molasses (or rum) in Baltimore, circa 1885. Vessel owned by J.H. Porter & Co. of Wedgeport. Wedgeport Tuna Museum.

fig.22



Boston Marine moored at the J.H. Porter & Co. wharf at Cap des Corporans around 1907. Wedgeport Tuna Museum

ESTABLISHING SCHOOLS: *religious, economic, and linguistic obstacles*

The Oath of Allegiance signed in Chignecto in 1727 illustrates the high rate of illiteracy amongst the Acadians in the decades preceding the Deportation (Figures 24 and 25).²⁷ Of course, this condition would be characteristic of most peasant societies of the time, but the fall of Port-Royal in 1710 compounded the problem since it meant the withdrawal of French administrators and educators. After the Deportation, as Catholics, Acadians were specifically prohibited from setting up schools. This 1766 law was repealed in 1786. Unfortunately, Catholics living in Cape Breton could not benefit from the new law since it was passed after Cape Breton became a separate colony in 1784.

There is ample proof of the widespread illiteracy amongst the Acadians in the early 1800s. For instance, in 1799 when Father Sigogne designated six prominent men in his St Mary's Bay parish to be his *hommes de confiance* (trusted men), only one of the them, Amable Doucet, was capable of signing his name. Not surprisingly, he became Clare's first Justice of the Peace.

The foundations of the public education system in Nova Scotia were laid down in a law passed in 1811 which recommended that a school be constructed in any area in which 30 families resided.²⁸ The province provided a small grant, but parents were responsible for at least half of the necessary funds for the construction of the school and the teacher's salary. In the early days of public education, school trustees were named by the local Justices of the Peace who were appointed as school commissioners.

Public schools were very slow to develop in the Acadian areas of Nova Scotia mainly because of poverty. Schooling in the 1800s was a luxury that few families could afford in either time or money. Young boys usually joined their fathers on the fishing boats

before they were 14 years old and young girls were needed at home to help their mothers and grandmothers with the domestic chores. The lack of French-speaking teachers, the absence of Acadian Justices of the Peace, and the general ostracization of the Acadian minority were also factors that prevented the establishment of schools.

A petition dated March 1828 from Arichat (Figures 26, 27, 28, and 29) documents the continuing problem of illiteracy.²⁹ Only 37 out of 87 petitioners could sign their name. To the best of my knowledge, this petition also documents the first public school in an Acadian region in Nova Scotia. It was established in Arichat (Isle Madame) in 1821. There are no Jersey names on the petition, which means that all the students enrolled in the school were Catholic. The majority of names are Acadian but there are a few Irishmen — a reflection of the Irish immigration into Richmond County in the early 1800s. The plea for continued support of this school on the part of the government is justified in this petition on the basis that educated men are required for the mercantile trade and the militia:

Arichat 1st March 1828

Sir,

We the subscribers do hereby certify that Mr John Walsh schoolmaster at Arichat has conducted the school with satisfaction to the public and credit to himself for upwards of seven years [at least since 1821], and that during that period he has educated gratis several children whose parents have been and now are unable to pay him and we do further certify that to our knowledge the number of children gratuitously educated by him have exceeded ten in number and have been never less than six in the year 1826. His excellency honoured the school with a visit when he evinced high approbation, Mr. Walsh's school at that time consisted of fifty children, six of them taught gratis, those six whose parents were unable to pay were pointed to his excellency at which he seemed highly pleased and in reply said he would see Mr.

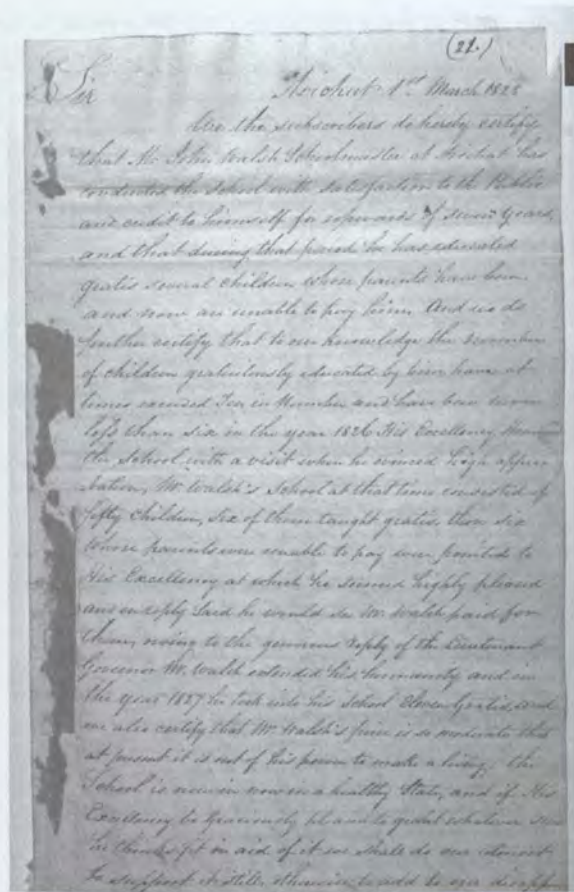


fig.24

Oath of Allegiance, 1727, Chignecto. A few Acadian men were able to sign their name, but most placed their mark beside their name. Nova Scotia Archives and Record Management, Microfilm MG11, C0217, vol. 5, fol. 65

fig.25



Detail of Figure 24. Oath of Allegiance, 1727, Chignecto

Walsh paid for them[.] owing to the generous reply of the Lieutenant Governor Mr. Walsh extended his humanity and in the year 1827 he took into his school eleven gratis, and at present it is out of his power to make a living, the school is now in a healthy state, and if his excellency be graciously pleased to grant whatever sum he thinks fit in aid of it we shall do our utmost to support it still, otherwise to add to our disap-

pointment it must fall to decay, under these circumstances we your constituents most humbly request you will have the goodness to present this to His Excellency. Imploring your aid its support which we held ourselves responsible to Mr. Walsh for. Should we be so unfortunate as to fail in His Excellency not noticing us we must consider our fate a hard one, we have spared no expense in erecting a comfortable schoolhouse and have used our endeavours to support a school. But notwithstanding in a few days we shall lose the man who has kept the school open to the children of the widow and to the orphan.

His Excellency will perceive that within the period of eight years we have several young men (educated under Mr Walsh) employed in the mercantile life, whilst two others have made voyages to the West Indies as masters and mates and gave great satisfaction to their employers. Several others hold commissions in the militia, this had not been done in the time of our Forefathers. And now shall we be compelled to live in ignorance in future, under the wide and paternal care of our present worthy Governor we place our confidence, and under his unshaken administration by aiding us in supporting our schools we hope shortly to cope with the best part of Nova Scotia, we conclude trusting that His Excellency may long reside amongst us to visit our Harbours and under his influence protect our Trade, we have the honor to be Sir with great esteem for you as our worthy representative and with most profound respect and obedience to the representative of our most gracious Sovereign,

Your very obedient Humble Servants

... J. Uniacke Esq [MLA]

J Bte Potvin PS [priest]

JB Maranda [priest]

The school report of Bear River, Digby County, submitted in 1828, provides an

example of overt discrimination against the Mi'kmaq minority. As was the custom, the names of the pupils in the one-room elementary school were indicated in alphabetical order (Figures 30 and 31). In the days before free schools, the word "gratis" after a name meant that the pupil was accepted free of charge. To be eligible for a provincial grant, a school had to guarantee the enrolment of a certain number of children whose parents could not afford to pay tuition. It is interesting to note that the name Norval Muise, identified as "Indian," is placed at the very end of the list.

According to the Nova Scotia School Records Collection (1812-1865) at the Nova Scotia Archives, the first public school in an Acadian village in Argyle was founded in 1828 in East Pubnico. It is very probable that the future MLA, Simon d'Entremont, was influential in the establishment of this elementary school. In 1838, schools were established in West Pubnico, Tusket Wedge, and Eel Brook (now Sainte-Anne-du-Ruisseau) and, for the first time, there are the names of several Acadian teachers. The first six public schools in Clare were established in 1832.³⁰ Armand Melanson and Father Jean-Mandé Sigogne were the first francophone teachers in the public school system that gradually developed along St. Mary's Bay.

The Education Act of 1841 allowed both French and Gaelic to be used, like English, as languages of instruction (a privilege that proved to be short-lived). This concession provided an enormous boost for schools in the Acadian regions throughout the province. The first eight public schools in the Chéticamp area appear in 1846. Urbain Cormier and William DeCarteret, a Jerseyman, were the first francophone teachers. The school report for the Chéticamp area, dated 31 December 1850, indicates that a teacher by the name of Laurent Chiasson had 23 boys and 5 girls in his school, despite the fact that there were 130 children in his area eligible to attend. It

Sir

Arichat 1st March 1828

We the subscribers do hereby certify that Mr John Walsh Schoolmaster at Arichat has conducted the school with satisfaction to the Public and credit to himself for upwards of seven years, and that during that period he has educated gratis several children whose parents have been, and now are unable to pay him. And we do further certify that to our knowledge the number of children gratuitously educated by him have at times exceeded Ten in Number and have been never less than six in the year 1826 His Excellency Honoured the school with a visit when he evinced high approbation, Mr Walsh's school at that time consisted of fifty children, six of them taught gratis, those six whose parents were unable to pay were pointed to His Excellency at which he seemed highly pleased and in reply said he would see Mr Walsh paid for them, owing to the generous reply of the Lieutenant Governor Mr Walsh extended his humanity and in the year 1827 he took into his school eleven gratis, and we also certify that Mr Walsh's price is so moderate that at present it is out of his power to make a living, the school is now in now in a healthy state, and if His Excellency be graciously pleased to grant whatever sum he thinks fit in aid of it we shall do our utmost to support it still, otherwise to add to our disapp-

Disappointment it must fall to decay, under these circumstances we your constituents most humbly request you will have the goodness to present this to his Excellency. Imploing your aid in its support which we hold ourselves responsible to Mr. Walsh for. Should ^{we} be so unfortunate as to fail in this Excellency not noticing us we must consider our fate a hard one, we have spend no expence in erecting a comfortable School house and have used our endeavours to support a school. But notwithstanding in a few days we shall lose the man who has kept the School open to the children of the widow and to the orphan &c &c

His Excellency will perceive that within the period of eight years we have several young men (educated under Mr. Walsh) employed in the Mercantile life. Whilst two others have made Voyages to the West Indies as Masters and Mates and gave great Satisfaction to their employes several others held Commissions in the Militia, this has not been done in the time of our Forefathers. And now shall we be compelled to live in ignorance in future, Under the wise and paternal care of our present worthy Governor we place our confidence, and under his unshaken administration by aiding us in supporting our Schools we hope shortly to cope with the best part of Nova-Scotia, we conclude trusting that His Excellency may long reside amongst us to visit our Harbours and under ^{his} influence protect our Trade, we have the Honor to be Sir with great esteem for you as our worthy Representatives and with most profound respect and obedience to the Representatives of our most Gracious Sovereign

Rich^d. J. Munnick Esq^r Your very obedient
 Humble Servants

Petition signed in 1828 in Arichat, Cape Breton. Nova Scotia Archives and Record Management, RG 1, vol. 336 #21 (microfilm MFM 15408)

J. B. Poirin P.S.	Joseph + Caste
J. B. Maranda pte	Ambrase + Gagnon
J. Patrick Murphy	Sabattent + Vignaux
Joseph Robin	Guace + Forest
Simon Froid	Joseph + Merchand
Wm. Fuller	Sepolte + Monneau
Victor Ferris	Eudebt + Wolf
Isaac Poir	John + Goddecke Jun.
Peter Desveaux	Joseph + Mantle
Peter P. Ferris	J. Mermeau
Anthony + Mantle	Simon San Day
Charles + Boudrot	Victor Ferris
Peter + Soubert	Joseph Mermeau
Edou + Vignaux	Simon Ferris
Elime Briand	George + Puceau
Charles Antoinche	Simon + Babine
Therese Lavoie	Regis + Benois
Julius + Bourcier	Calliton + LeBlanc
Charles Boudrot	Desire Ferris
John L. + Huro	Benoit + Ferris
Joseph + Bouche	Simon + Givoir
John + Huro	Phillip + Furlong
Simon + Bouche	Alex + Babine
Anthony + Wolf	Joseph Ferris
Simon + LeBlanc	Joseph + Hebert Jun
	Benoit + Laflour

Petition signed in 1828 in Arichat, Cape Breton. Nova Scotia Archives and Record Management, RG 1, vol. 336 #21 (microfilm MFM 15408)

Kelley Mantell	James Toyle
Simon & Mantell	Charles Landry
Michael Foret	Jean Landry
Wm. Carlan	Simon Genour
Nich & Boudrot	Francis Larue
Thomas. Heneberg	Michael Egan
John W. Brien	Eduard Remy
John ^{the} Petty	Laurence Kavanagh Junr
Michael Petty	Edward Kavanagh
Stephen Banton	Michael Rodman
Thomas Gallahan	Morgan Doyle
Andrew Whinn	David Barry
Patrick Sheehar	Denis W. Sweeney
John Lillhang	Lambert Loneragan
Michael Neair	Michel Belfontel
Thomas Bourne	Michel Belfontel jr
Joseph McDougal	Joseph & Wubert
Alexander Kinca	Maximant & Landry
Matthew Macdonell	Maximant & Foret

I do hereby certify that all the within signatures
 were in my presence.

J. B. Polin P.S.

Petition signed in 1828 in Arichat, Cape Breton.
 Nova Scotia Archives and Record Management, RG 1, vol. 336 #21 (microfilm MFM 15408)

fig.30

Names & Ages of the scholars taught in School No. 2 Township of Clare

No.	Names	Age
1	Robert White	7
2	Luanda White	1
3	Mary White	1
4	Thomas Harris	1
5	Mattilda Harris	5
6	Elizabeth Harris	11
7	John White	1
8	Sarah Ann White	11
9	Harriet White	1
10	Sarah White	9
11	Ellen White	11
12	James White	6
13	James Harris	8
14	Isabella Harris	1
15	William Whittle gratis	7
16	Olga White	9
17	Olga White	11
18	Leah Brown	8
19	Benjamin Harris	11
20	Harriet Morgan	8
21	Maria Dodge	12
22	James M. Formano	9
23	Diada M. Formano	7
24	Honrietta Clark	8
25	Susana Clark	5
26	Harriet Harris	10
27	Mattilda Harris	8
28	Mary Harris	10
29	Sarah Ann Rice	8
30	Benjamin Rice gratis	6
31	George Harris	8
32	Lavinia Dodge	8
33	Ertha A. Rice	12
34	Martha Rice	9
35	Isachaim Rice	5
36	Laura Robbins	9
37	Lillian Robbins gratis	12
38	Norvel Muise (Indian)	18

1828 School Report for School #2 in Bear River, Digby County.
Nova Scotia Archives and Record Management, RG 14, vol 12 #31

is important to note, however, that the establishment of a school in any rural community, Acadian or otherwise, did not mean that all the children in the area were being educated. In fact, an 1861 census showed that only 36 percent of school-age children in Nova Scotia were attending school.

As we have already seen, Clare has been more fortunate from a political point of view than any of the other Acadian regions in Nova Scotia. To a certain extent, this is due to the fact that in 1768 a section of the province was designated specifically for the resettlement of Acadians. This policy resulted in the development of a series of adjoining villages populated almost exclusively by Acadians.³¹ This homogeneous population base also proved advantageous with regard to the administration of the local schools. As can be seen in the 1845 school report submitted for Clare, all of the administrative positions in the school system were held by

fig.31

17	Olga White	11
18	Leah Brown	9
19	Benjamin Harris	11
20	Harriet Morgan	8
21	Maria Dodge	12
22	James M. Formano	9
23	Diada M. Formano	7
24	Honrietta Clark	8
25	Susana Clark	5
26	Harriet Harris	10
27	Mattilda Harris	8
28	Mary Harris	10
29	Sarah Ann Rice	8
30	Benjamin Rice gratis	6
31	George Harris	8
32	Lavinia Dodge	8
33	Ertha A. Rice	12
34	Martha Rice	9
35	Isachaim Rice	5
36	Laura Robbins	9
37	Lillian Robbins gratis	12
38	Norvel Muise (Indian)	18

Detail of Figure 30 showing "Norvel Muise (Indian),"
1828 School Report for School #2 in Bear River.

Acadians (Figures 32 and 33). Acadians in Clare could become trustees, schools commissioners, and clerks, virtually without competition from anglophones. In contrast to the "privileged" situation in Clare, the first Acadian school commissioner in Argyle was not appointed until 1860; the first Acadian commissioner in Inverness County was Father Hubert Giroir who was not appointed until 1870.

The same school report of 1845 is also interesting because it indicates the presence of a female teacher, Mary Deveau. Once women were allowed to teach in elementary schools in Nova Scotia in 1838, they became an increasingly important part of the public education system. By 1884 they constituted 75 percent of all teachers in the public school system and in 1914 they constituted 90 percent of the teaching staff.³² (Figures 34, 35 and 36)

While the examples given in the preceding paragraphs document the gradual devel-

fig.32



Teaching sister and her pupils at Middle West Pubnico School, circa 1910, a reminder of the role convents played in supplying teachers in Acadian communities. The Sisters of Charity had a convent in Eel Brook (now known as Sainte-Anne-du-Ruisseau) and in West Pubnico. Argyle Township Court House and Archives, P1992: 336. Clayton Karkosh Collection.

fig.33

Report of School, School No. 5, Township of Clare for half year ending the 31st October 1845

Name of teacher	Assistant	Traverse Record	Number of books of books, copy, or number of fees for a month	Value of books for year or month (for six months)	Salary of teacher of year	State of the School
Mary Ann	John	Joseph W. Longin John Bond	Salary of \$ 0.00 Fees Total \$ 0.00	\$ 6.00	None	good
Total number of children in the school	whether any private in other schools in school district	How long this school has been kept	Value of books in school	What description of roads for	Sum of money paid by government	Residual out of school
114	None	From the 1st of October 1844	None	None	None	\$ 6.00

Done at St. John's N.S. the 1st of November 1845

Attest: Mary Ann

Done at St. John's N.S. the 1st of November 1845

Attest: John

1845 School Report for a school in Clare. Nova Scotia Archives and Record Management, RG 14, vol 12 #146

fig.35



Schoolhouse in Little Anse (Petite-Anse), circa 1938. It was probably built in the decade following the Education Act of 1864. Because this part of Isle Madame did not get electricity until 1948, there was no indoor plumbing, hence the outhouse. Photo by Clara Dennis. Public Archives of Nova Scotia, Album 43, #433

fig.36



Teams of oxen moving a building at Collège Sainte-Anne in 1905. The college (now Université Sainte-Anne) was founded in 1890 by the Eudist Fathers. It was an all male college until 1967. Photo given to Sally Ross by Félix Thibodeau in 1985

opment of Acadian schools in the century that followed the Deportation, they do not reflect the enormous difficulties involved in ensuring French-language education in an anglophone province.³³ Acadians have engaged in a long struggle for the right to use French as a language of instruction, and until very recently, they have been confronted with a lack of French-language textbooks and a shortage of teachers with schooling and training in French. It is important to remember that Acadian leaders such as Father Hubert Giroir and Monseigneur Édouard LeBlanc, mentioned at the beginning of this article, grew up in a province that valued exclusively the English language and English customs. Preserving one's cultural and linguistic identity while at the same time participating in the growth and development of society at large constitutes an immensely complex challenge. On the one hand, isolation from the mainstream served to bolster and preserve Acadian culture and Acadian speech varieties. On the other hand, absorption or assimilation caused by the pressures of economic survival eroded both the language and the culture.

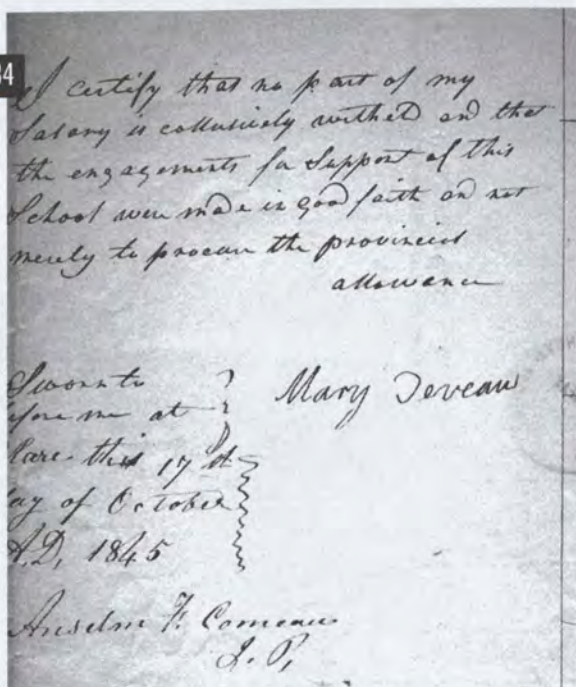
ACADIANS LOOKING AT THEMSELVES VERSUS ACADIANS SEEN BY OTHERS

The position of a minority in any society depends greatly on attitudes, both positive and negative, from within and without. In other words, the status of a minority depends on how it is treated or mistreated by the majority and how it views and projects itself. Although at opposite ends of a behavioural continuum, tolerance and bigotry are concrete manifestations of attitudes.

Documents dating from the 1760s, 1770s, and 1780s indicate clearly that the British authorities regarded the Acadians with considerable suspicion and mistrust. However, the same authorities also recognized that the Acadians constituted a valuable resource to be exploited when necessary. Acadians anywhere who spoke Mi'kmaq — referred to as “interpreters of the Indian language”³⁴ — were considered extremely useful. So, too, were Acadians who were skilful in the construction of dykes. Joseph Frederick Wallet William Desbarres, in particular, wanted them as tenants on the vast marshland estates that he was granted after the Deportation.³⁵ The Jersey merchants wanted them as labour in their fishing operations because of their knowledge of the waterways and the coastline and because of their ties with the Mi'kmaq, potential suppliers of furs. As time passed, these positive attitudes were overshadowed by the firm conviction that the Acadians, or the “French people” as they were called throughout the nineteenth century and most of the twentieth century, should adopt not only the English language but also English customs.

The undeniable pull exercised by both cultures expressed itself in many ways. Abraham Lavache's tombstone in Arichat shows that this duality persisted even at death (Figure 37). Abraham Lavache (1809–1879) was a member of the third generation of the Lavache family on Isle Madame. His

fig. 34



Detail of Figure 33, showing signatures of school officials and of the teacher, Mary Deveau

grandfather came to work for the Jersey merchants of the Robin Company in 1774. As one can see from the inscription on the gravestone, the English language became part of Lavache's Acadian identity.



fig.37

Abraham Lavache (1809-1879). Bilingual tombstone, Notre-Dame de l'Assomption Cemetery in Arichat, Cape Breton. Photo by Sally Ross, 1994

*Gloria in excelsio Deo
A la pieuse mémoire
Abraham Lavache*

décédé le 20 avril 1879

*Agé de 70 ans
rip*

*Remember me as you pass by
As you are now so once was I
As I am now you soon shall be
Prepare for death and follow me*

Phillips & McQueen

Siffroi Pothier (1862-1937) from Belleville and Eugène Meuse (1885-1972) from Buttes-Amirault are perhaps the first professional Acadian photographers. Both of them travelled throughout Argyle to photograph the significant and insignificant events that punctuated life of their time. Fortunately, many of their works have survived. One of Siffroi Pothier's most famous photographs documents a church picnic in West Pubnico around 1895.³⁶

Eugène Meuse captured, with both humour and spontaneity, the daily life of his compatriots (Figures 7, 38, 39, 40 and 41).

Clara Dennis, a writer and journalist from Halifax, travelled extensively in the 1930s chronicling life in some of the more out-of-the-way places in Nova Scotia.³⁷ Many of her photographs provide invaluable glimpses of landscapes of the past (Figures 10, 13, 14, and 15). It is interesting, however, to compare her perspective with that of Eugène Meuse who was photographing in his own community at the turn of the century. Like the folklorist Helen Creighton, Clara Dennis took numerous pictures of women seated at their spinning wheel, often in contrived contexts (Figures 42, 43 and 44). Unlike the strength and nobility of the women at the carding bee (Figure 40) or the boat builders in Salmon River (Figure 45), Clara Dennis's spinners become symbols of



fig.38

Weeding cabbages in Buttes-Amirault (Amirault's Hill) around 1900. Photo by Eugène Meuse. Since the photographer was born in Buttes-Amirault, this may well be his home. The surplus cabbages were sold in Yarmouth. Argyle Township Court House and Archives, P1995: 290



fig.39

The village of Buttes-Amirault around 1904. Photo by Eugène Meuse. Argyle Township Court House and Archives, P1995: 887

quaintness. Perhaps because of the cliché style of her photographs, the people she captures appear poor and rustic (Figures 46 and 47).

The photograph showing four women from Abram's River wearing the traditional Acadian kerchief (Figure 48) was taken in a studio by a professional photographer around 1897. Research has revealed that it was taken for publication in tourism brochures promoting travel in Yarmouth and Shelburne Counties.³⁸ Captioned "A Characteristic Group," the photograph was definitely designed to portray Acadian women as picturesque and old-fashioned. In contrast, the photograph showing Domatille and Romain Amirault was also taken in a studio (Figure 49), perhaps on their wedding day. Despite the fact that this couple was photographed in 1870, almost thirty years before the so-called "Characteristic Group," they do not appear either quaint or rustic.



fig.41

Installation of the bridge linking Sluice Point (Pointe-à-Sault) and Surette's Island. Photo by Eugène Meuse in 1909. Argyle Township Court House and Archives, P1993: 328

I have chosen two family portraits, both taken around 1900, to show that Acadian society was and is just as stratified as any other society (Figures 50 and 51). Despite their different social backgrounds, both families are portrayed with equal solemnity and dignity. Five or six generations after the Deportation, both families are firmly grounded in their society.



fig.40

A carding bee in Buttes-Amirault around 1905. Four generations of the Amirault family are shown in this photo by Eugène Meuse. All of the individuals have been identified. Argyle Township Court House and Archives, P 1993: 303

fig.42



Madame Elsie Poirier of Chéticamp, circa 1938. Photo by Clara Dennis and labelled the "Coy Spinner." Nova Scotia Archives and Record Management, Album 43 #19

fig.46



Monsieur and Madame Ernest Boudreau and their son, Alex, in Poulamond (Isle Madame). Photo by Clara Dennis, circa 1938. Nova Scotia Archives and Record Management, Album 43, N-3911

fig.43



Madame Frederick Desveaux, age 82, Point Cross (near Chéticamp), circa 1938. A "staged" photo, since it would be difficult to spin on the uneven ground. Nova Scotia Archives and Record Management, Section XXIV, Album 43

fig.47



Connie Fougère, his dog, and his mother in Larry's River, circa 1938. The photo provides interesting details of the fence and house. Photo by Clara Dennis. Nova Scotia Archives and Record Management, Album 43, N 5164

fig.44



Madame Jude Arsenaull, age 70, Margaree. Photo by Clara Dennis, circa 1938. Nova Scotia Archives and Record Management, Section XXIV, Album 43, N-4376

fig.45



Boatbuilders in Salmon River, Digby County in 1917. Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, N.S., MP300.13.2/N-10036.

CONCLUSION

I would like to conclude with a colourful card showing a piping plover and the Acadian flag (Figure 52). This card was made in 1996 by eleven year-old Élise Benoît of Pomquet, Antigonish County. Élise is obviously proud that one of the very rare nesting grounds of the piping plover is located on Pomquet Beach, near her village. When writing about linguistic and cultural survival, I have always been reluctant to use ecological metaphors. But Élise Benoît's card, which juxtaposes, by chance, the Acadian flag and a shore bird on the endangered species list, gave me a great deal of food for thought. I have never understood why it is so easy to mobilize people around threatened species of birds and animals and why people in general are unmoved by the thought of disappearing or endangered languages and cultures.



fig.48

From L. to R. are: Marie LeBlanc, Marie Babin, Marie Hélène LeBlanc, and Madeleine LeBlanc, all from Abram's River. This was a "staged" portrait used for tourism booklets in 1897 to promote travel on the Coast Railway. Argyle Township Court House and Archives, P1991: 432. Susan Young Collection



fig.49

Domatille (LeBlanc) and Romain Amirault from Buttes-Amirault, around 1870. Perhaps a wedding portrait. Argyle Township Court House and Archives, P1990: 230



fig.50

Patrice Doucet (1841-1923), his third wife Rosalie LeBlanc, and family. Photo taken in the lumbering community of Quinan (a little inland village in Argyle), 1900. All the individuals have been identified. Argyle Township Court House and Archives, P1987: 262



fig.51

Charlotte (Dugas) and André Pothier of Wedgeport, shown with their family. André is a brother of Anselme Pothier seen in Figures 19 and 20. Their shipping and fishing enterprise was one of the largest businesses in Yarmouth county in the late 1800s. Argyle Township Court House and Archives, P1993: 165

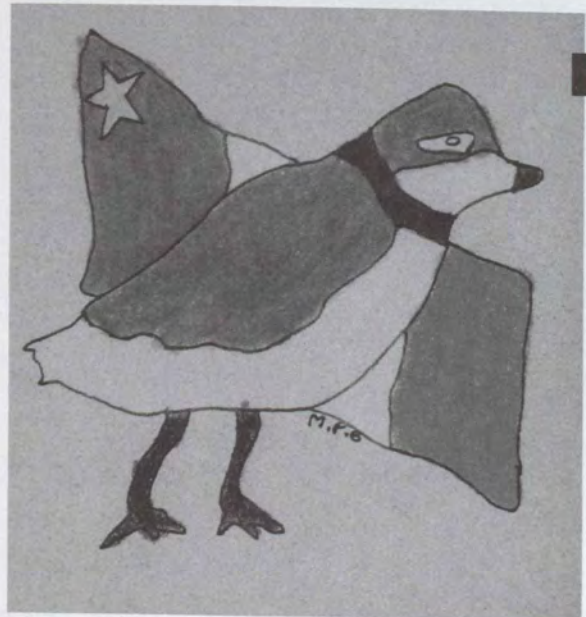


fig.52

Piping plover and the Acadian Flag by Élise Benoît, 1996. Sally Ross Collection

NOTES

1. Hubert Girroir's great-grandparents fled Port-Royal in 1755 and lived a migrant existence that led them from Memramcook to Baie-Fortune (Isle Saint-Jean) to Fort Cumberland to Halifax to Chezzetcook and finally to Tracadie where they settled in 1782 with their sons. Ephrem Boudreau, "L'abbé Hubert Girroir 1825-1884," *Les Cahiers de la Société historique acadienne* 6, 2 (1975): 69-81; "Un évêché au Cap-Breton," *Les Cahiers de la Société historique acadienne* 5, 3 (1974): 108-119; Sally Ross and Alphonse J. Deveau, *The Acadians of Nova Scotia* (Halifax: Nimbus Publishing, 1992), 122-124, 128, 129, 176

2. Son of Luc LeBlanc and Julia Belliveau, Mgr Édouard LeBlanc (1870-1935) was born in Ohio, a small village south of Weymouth. Alphonse J. Deveau, *Les personnes éminentes* (Yarmouth: Les Éditions Lescarbot, 1988), 112; Léon Thériault, "The Acadianization of Ecclesiastical Structures in the Maritimes, 1758-1953" in *Acadia of the Maritimes* (Moncton: Chaire d'études acadiennes, Université de Moncton, 1995), 415-451

3. Daguerreotypes were first produced in Nova Scotia in the 1840s and ambrotypes and tintypes in the late 1850s. Scott Robson, "From Daguerreotype to Disposable Camera: 150 Years of Photography," *The Occasional* 12, 1 (1989): 19-27
4. Judging from the content of public photographic collections, it would appear that the close proximity of an urban centre like Yarmouth may have increased the accessibility or availability of photographers for the Acadians in Argyle.
5. Unlike so many Acadian place names, Pointe à Major has not been anglicized. Belliveau's Cove (the name used on official maps) or Anse-des-Belliveau was named after descendants of Pierre Belliveau who settled permanently on the shores of the cove in the late 1760s.
6. Born near present-day Granville Ferry
7. Neil J. Boucher, "The Doucets of Saint Mary's Bay: Community Leaders Amongst an Uprooted People," *The Nova Scotia Historical Review* 5, 1 (1985): 43-58
8. Ross and Deveau, 74-75
9. The most famous of these merchants from the English Channel Islands was Charles Robin who established permanent fishing stations in Paspébiac (Québec), Caraquet (New Brunswick), Arichat, and Chéticamp in Cape Breton. The Channel Islands were populated by Huguenots (Protestants from France) in the late 1600s. The Jersey and Guernsey merchants spoke French and were members of the Church of England. Janvrin Island, Bissett Island, and Jerseyman Island, for example, bear witness to the Jersey and Guernsey presence off Isle Madame.
10. He immigrated to Isle Madame in the late 1700s and died in Arichat in 1849. For further details on the power of the Jersey merchants, see: Sally Ross, "Majorité ou minorité: le cas de l'île Madame," *Les cahiers de la Société historique acadienne* 23 (1992): 143-157
11. Given the eloquent style, the polished handwriting, and the lack of signatures it is highly unlikely that these women penned the letters themselves.
12. This appears to be a phonetic transcription of the English name Hagan. He is described as an "ingénieur" although "arpenteur", or surveyor, would be more common in modern terms.
13. Bonain or Bonin, a French name associated with one of the eighteenth-century outports of Louisbourg, is usually given the phonetic spelling of Bonang.
14. Jean Jean was another Jersey notable living in Isle Madame. He was a merchant who occupied various official functions. He died in 1848.
15. Neil Boucher, *The Development of an Acadian Village* (Yarmouth: Les Éditions Lescarbot Press, 1980), 17-22
16. For a critique of this basically undemocratic system of government (a legacy of sixteenth-century England) which was also adopted in Virginia but not in Massachusetts, see: J. Murray Beck, *The Evolution of Municipal Government in Nova Scotia 1749-1973: A Study* (Halifax : Nova Scotia Royal Commission on Education, Public Service and Provincial-Municipal Relations, 1973).
17. Father Sigogne was appointed Justice of the Peace in 1806.
18. One of the reasons why Acadian Justices of the Peace were not deemed to be necessary in Richmond and Inverness counties was due to the presence of merchants from the Channel Islands of Jersey and Guernsey. Not only did these men belong to the Anglican Church, but they were fluent in both written and spoken French and English. Consequently, they could easily act as intermediaries between the authorities and the large population of Acadian francophones.
19. The Mi'kmaq were Catholic. Relegated to reserves, they had no vote until 1960.
20. One version of the Test Oath read as follows:
"I, _____, protest, certify and declare solemnly and sincerely in the presence of God, that I believe that in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper there is no transubstantiation of the elements of wine and bread into the body and blood of Christ, in and after consecration by any person whomsoever; and that the invocation or adoration of the Virgin Mary, or any other saint and the sacrifice of the mass in the manner in the usage at present in the Roman Church, is superstition and idolatry." Philippe Doucet, "Politics and the Acadians," *The Acadians of the Maritimes* (Moncton: Université de Moncton, 1982), 228
21. A.A. Johnston, *A History of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nova Scotia* (Antigonish: St. Francis Xavier University Press, 1960) Vol. I, 450-452. Shirley B. Elliott, *The Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia 1758-1983* (Halifax: Province of Nova, Department of Government Services, 1984), 106
22. Annapolis County was divided to create Digby County in April 1837.

23. The situation is even more blatant in the case of the Black minority in Nova Scotia. In 1993, Wayne Adams was the first Black elected to the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.
24. J. Murray Beck, *Government of Nova Scotia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), 165-67
25. Argyle Township Court House and Archives 1997 Calendar.
26. Their father was the aforementioned Dominique Pothier who settled on Captain MacKinnon's land in 1775. Ross and Deveau 79-80; Clarence-J. d'Entremont, *Wedgeport de 1767 à nos jours* (Wedgeport: Les Éditions Lescarbot, 1995), 36-39
27. Near present-day Amherst
28. For a succinct overview of the development of public schools in Nova Scotia see: *Report of the Royal Commission on Education, Public Services and Provincial-Municipal Relations* (Halifax: Queen's Printer, 1974), Vol III, Chapter 36
29. Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management, RG1 336 # 21 (microfilm 15408)
30. Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management, Public Record Inventory No. 120, Nova Scotia School Records Collection, RG 14, vol. 12. The schools were located in New Edinburgh, Belliveau's Cove, Church Point, Meteghan, Mavilette, and Salmon River.
31. Ross and Deveau, 99-100
32. James Harold Binguay, *Public Education in Nova Scotia: a History and a Commentary* (Kingston: The Jackson Press, 1919), 48
33. For a detailed analysis see: Ross and Deveau, 153-176
34. The Petitpas (Cape Breton), the d'Entremonts, the Muises, and the Doucets (southwest Nova Scotia) were well-known families with valuable ties to the Mi'kmaq.
35. Ross and Deveau, 100-102
36. Ross and Deveau, 85; Argyle Township Court House and Archives 1996 Calendar, photo for the month of July. Many of his photos can be seen at the Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management in the Siffroi Pothier Fonds.
37. Clara Dennis, *Down in Nova Scotia: my own my native land* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1934); *More about Nova Scotia: my own my native land* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1937); *Cape Breton Over* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1942)
38. Notes on the photos by Susan Young, Argyle Township Court House and Archives 1997 Calendar