

LE GRAND DERANGEMENT  
THE ACADIAN EXULSION OF 1755

HISTORY 489  
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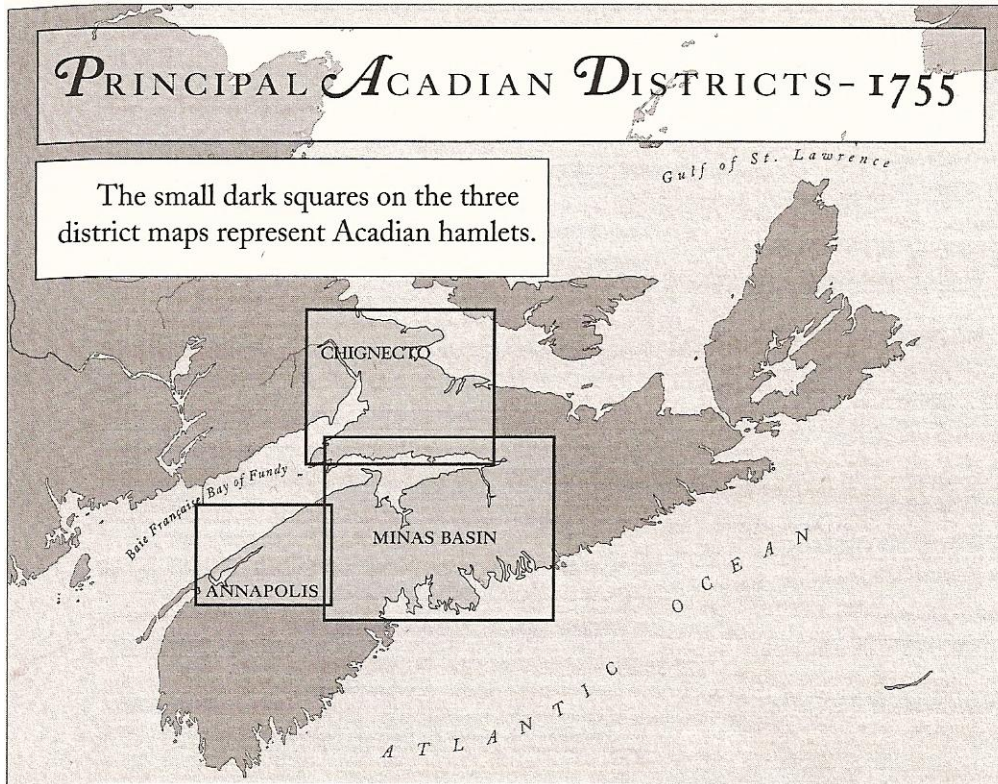
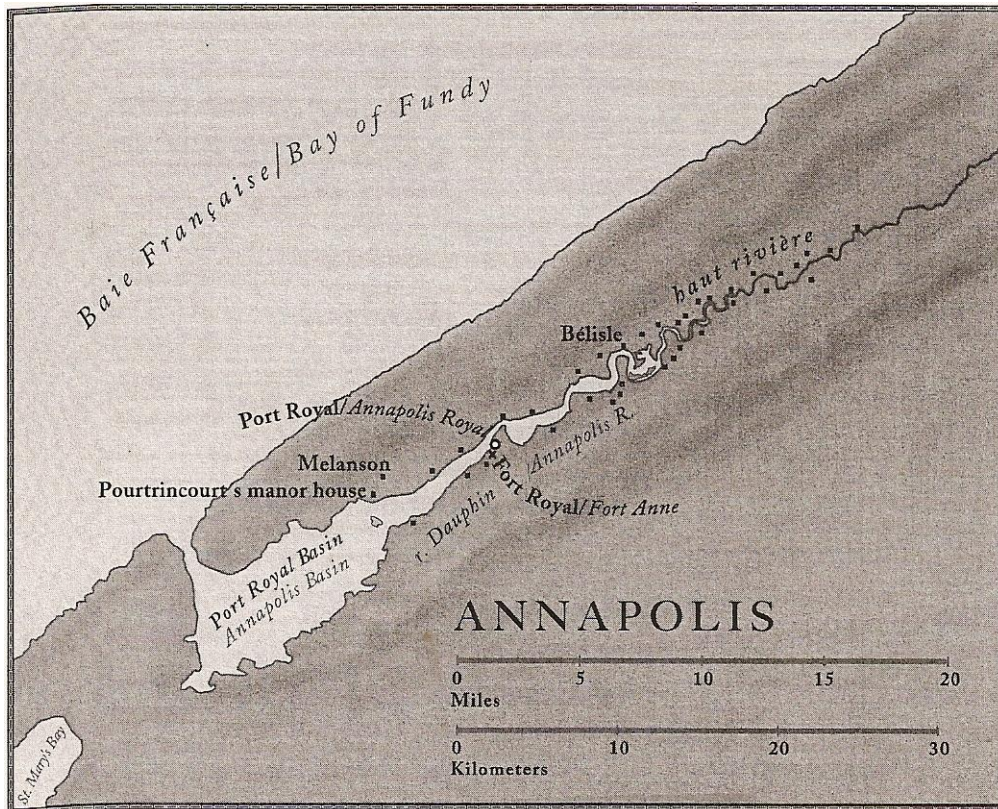
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MAY 6, 2008

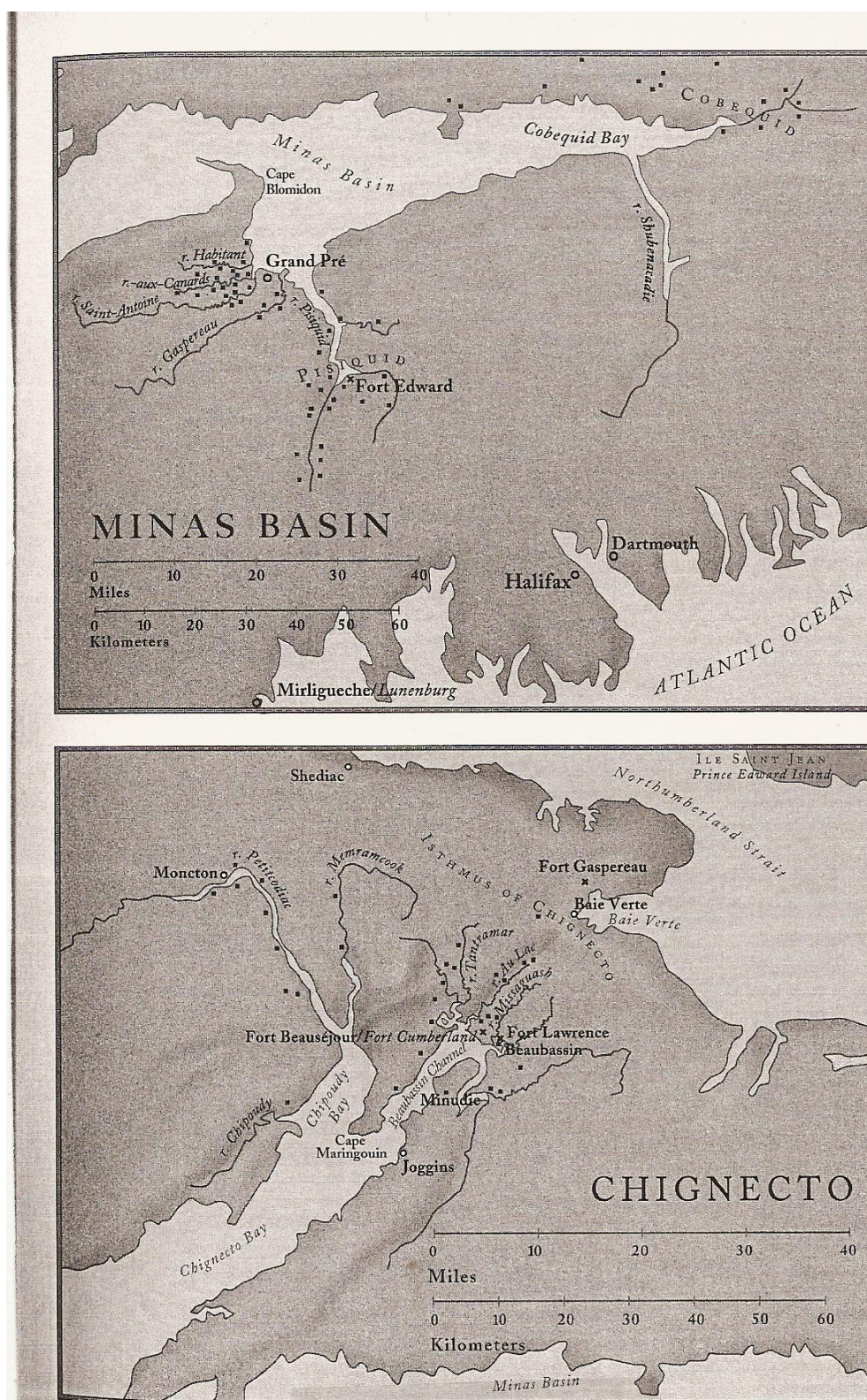


Dedicated to my family, who believes more in me than I do in myself.

**ABSTACT:**

The Acadians were a Francophone people who lived in Nova Scotia after 1604. In 1713 the colony and its citizens became British. This created a great conflict between the French Inhabitants, as the British called the Acadians, and the British rulers. This conflict reached its culmination in 1755 when Governor Charles Lawrence forcibly deported all the Acadians to other British Colonies in North America. The forcible deportation, also called the Expulsion or in French, *Le Grand Dérangement*, was an act of war and retaliation for the British and an offensive, in both meanings of the word, act towards the Acadians.





John Mack Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme: The Tragic Story of the Expulsion of the French Acadians from their American Homeland* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2005), xxvi-xxvii.

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## Introduction

"This is the forest primeval; but where are the hearts that beneath it  
 Leaped like the roe, when he hears in the woodland the voice of the  
 huntsman?  
 Where is the thatch-roofed village, the home of Acadian farmers,-  
 Men whose lives glided on like rivers that water the woodlands,  
 Darkened by shadows of earth, but reflecting on image of heaven?  
 Waste are those pleasant farms, and the farmers forever departed!  
 Scattered like dust and leaves, when the mighty blasts of October  
 Seize them, and whirl them aloft, and sprinkle them far o'er the ocean.  
 Naught but tradition remains of the beautiful village at Grand-Pré."<sup>1</sup>

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow romanticized and immortalized the plight and fate of the Acadian people in his epic poem "Evangeline: A Tale of Acadie". Here is the truth about the Acadians and their forced expulsion from their homeland.

The colony of Nova Scotia was originally a French colony called *Acadie*, French for Acadia. The colony then switched sovereignty and became a British colony in 1713 linked to the British mainland colonies. The people in the colony became, or had the option of being, British citizens. Those who remained retained their French culture, language, and Catholic faith. England in 1713 was a Protestant country that did not allow Catholics to hold public office. France retained its North American territory of Canada, to the west and north of Acadia.

The differences between the New England people and the Acadians were vast and caused problems of misunderstanding. The differences included religion, culture, and economic values. The New Englanders were angry in the 1750s because the Acadians had been living on British soil for forty years and had not promised loyalty or agreed to fight for their country. The New

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<sup>1</sup> Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *Poems and Other Writings* (New York, NY: The Library of America, 2000), 57.

Englanders perceived that the Acadians received the same benefits without the same duties. Yet, the British in turn did not support or understand the Acadian culture and traditions, language, or religion.<sup>2</sup>

In this paper, I will demonstrate that the Acadian expulsion was an American based phenomenon. I will show this through the motives of the individuals involved and how this, and not state policy, drove the expulsion. I will also show how the previous relations between the Acadians and New Englanders gave the basis for the Acadian resistance. I will illustrate that the conditions and process of the expulsion were again based in Nova Scotia for personal reasons.

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<sup>2</sup> Andrew Clark, *Acadia: The Geography of Early Nova Scotia to 1769* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968), 360.

### The Essence of Acadians

The Acadians were a people of French descent who migrated to North America, present-day Nova Scotia, in the early 1600s. They came from the west central regions of France including Poitou, Anjou, and Touraine.<sup>3</sup> Port Royal was their first town founded in August of 1604 by the French.<sup>4</sup> Henri IV of France and his Minister the Duc de Sully granted the permission for a French settlement in the new world.<sup>5</sup> The Acadian economy was primarily the fur trade and Atlantic fisheries.<sup>6</sup> However, it remained small. In 1650, there were only 300 people in the settlement despite efforts to increase the population.

The original colony of Acadia included parts of Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Maine. The origins of the name are unclear but there are two plausible theories. First, the name comes from a poem written in 1502 called “Arcadia”, talking about the idealized area in Greece and the name then became distorted over time to Acadia. Second, the Micmak who lived in the area had a suffix, -akadie, that meant a place of abundance and this was adopted by the French because the land was so fertile.<sup>7</sup>

Over time, the Acadians developed a distinct identity that was neither French nor Mikmaq. The identity flourished because of the small number of settlers and their close relations with the Mikmaq. Many of the original Acadians became Mikmaq in appearance and married

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<sup>3</sup> Alec G. Hargreaves, *Memory, Empire and Postcolonialism: Legacies of French Colonialism* (New York: Lexington Books, 2005), 71.

<sup>4</sup> Emile Lauvriere, *La Tragedie d'un Peuple: Histoire du Peuple Acadien de ses origines à nos jours* (Paris: Ames et Chose, 1924), 12.

<sup>5</sup> Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 27.

<sup>6</sup> N.E.S. Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian: A North American Border People 1604-1755* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), 47.

<sup>7</sup> John Mack Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme: The Tragic Story of the Expulsion of the French Acadians from their American Homeland* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2005), 6.

Mikmaq women.<sup>8</sup> This helped enlarge the colony because of the small number of French women who migrated to the colony.<sup>9</sup> The Acadians retained some French characteristics. However, these characteristics were of the time before Louis XIII or about the time of their original settlement in Acadia. In the 1700s, the Acadian culture was different from the culture of France and that of French Canada.<sup>10</sup>

The people of the colony developed into a close-knit group. They lived as extended families in villages headed by a patriarch. They did not measure their wealth in terms of the money it would bring them but rather in what they gained from their efforts such as the grain produced. There was very little use of money within the colony.<sup>11</sup> Their lack of material evidence of work could be one of the reasons given for their expulsion in later years.

The defining characteristics of this group, that separated them from their neighbors in New England, were their adherence to the Catholic faith and their independent mindset. Until just before their expulsion in 1755, the Acadians had priests in their community, courtesy of the Bishop of Quebec.<sup>12</sup> Another commonly noticed characteristic of the Acadians was their independence. They lived in largely self-governed communities and were used to having an equal voice in affairs that concerned them.<sup>13</sup>

Catholicism was a problem for two reasons. First, the catholic religion was not tolerated in England. A man in London did not have the freedom to be Catholic the way the Acadians did. The New Englanders saw this as an unfair right; it was something the majority of British citizens did not have therefore neither should the Acadians.

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<sup>8</sup> Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme*., 36.

<sup>9</sup> Lauviere, *La Tragedie d'un Peuple*, 169.

<sup>10</sup> Hargreaves, *Memory and Empire*, 74.

<sup>11</sup> Lauviere, *La Tragedie d'un Peuple*, 180-182.

<sup>12</sup> Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 436.

<sup>13</sup> Lauviere, *La Tragedie d'un Peuple*, 185.

Second, the French Priests were not loyal to the King of England. Rather, they were loyal to the Bishop of Quebec. The priests openly promoted French aims in British territory and for non-cooperation with British laws. Even though the Bishop of Quebec urged the priests not to get involved in political matters they were still seen as the reason behind the Acadian resistance.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 434.

### The Conflict Origins

The colony of Acadia became English with the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. According to the treaty, the Acadians who remained in the colony one year after the treaty became British citizens.<sup>15</sup> The land granted in the treaty did not include the area of Chignecto, the area surrounding Beauséjour. According to British law, made before the Tudor dynasty, anyone born on British soil was a British citizen by birth. The commonly held international law of the time was that people who stayed on land that changed sovereignty because of a treaty would automatically become citizens of the new country. Thus, the Acadians, while French in heritage became English as would the generations born after the treaty.<sup>16</sup>

Since 1713, the Acadians held to a conditional oath of loyalty to Great Britain. This oath included the provisions that the Acadians had religious freedom and that they were not required to bear arms in defense of Great Britain. Some Acadians took the unqualified oath in 1727 or 1730. The Acadians felt that because they had taken the previous oath there was no need for them to swear and unqualified oath, this would become the crux of the problem in 1755.<sup>17</sup>

The males between the ages of 16 and 60 were pushed to take the oath. Reports state that all of the Acadians in the Bay of Fundy took the oath but there is not a copy of the oath retained in the records. This could mean that the Acadians had already taken an unconditional oath but it cannot be proven. Governor Phillips did the wording and it is apparent that the Lords of Trade did not approve the wording of the oath. Reports state the oath in French included the phrase, “en foi de Chrétien”<sup>18</sup>, a phrase that did not exist in the English text.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Thomas B. Akins. ed., Benjamin Curren trans., *Selections from the Public Documents of Nova Scotia* (Halifax NS: Charles Annad, 1869), 235.

<sup>16</sup> Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 457.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 410.

<sup>18</sup> “In Christian Faith”.

The years between 1713 and 1755 were still a time of unrest for the Acadians and New Englanders. There were many governors throughout that time. The apparent succession is Governors Phillips, Armstrong, Mascarene, Cornwallis, Hopson, and Lawrence. This vast number of leaders led to differing and contradictory policies.

For example, Governor Phillips pressed the swearing of an oath but it is uncertain if it was a qualified or unqualified oath. A qualified oath gave extra privileges to the Acadians. An unqualified oath meant loyalty to England without any qualifications or extra privileges. In 1731, Phillip returned to England when ordered by the Board of Trade. Armstrong took a stance against the Acadians because of disputes over the ownership of land, rent due on the land, and the disobedience of the Acadians.<sup>20</sup>

There is little documentation but Governor Mascarene seemed to have a dispute over land as well. In a letter dated November 15, 1750, he states that the Acadians had outgrown their original settlements and were illegally moving to new lands. This was a problem for him and he was reluctant to grant new land deeds to the Acadians.<sup>21</sup>

Governor Cornwallis seemed to have taken a hard stance against the Acadians. He had a policy of forced requisitioning of supplies. In this policy, the military could use force to get the supplies needed from the Acadians. This meant that the military could take anything saying it was necessary and the Acadians had no recourse to retrieve their property.<sup>22</sup>

Governor Hopson changed this policy. His position was that the Acadians had the full protection of the law. This meant that the army could not seize their property at will.<sup>23</sup> Hopson

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<sup>19</sup> Akins, *Selections*, 85-87.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 91.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 108-113.

<sup>22</sup> Faragher, *Great and Noble Scheme*, 294.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 294.

was of the opinion that it did not matter if the Acadians had or had not taken an unqualified oath. They were still to receive equal treatment under the law.<sup>24</sup>

The Seven Years War and the French and Indian War had an effect on the decision to expel the Acadians. The Seven Years War in Europe pitted, among others, France and England against each other for territorial control of North America, India, and Germany. The French and Indian War was an extension of the Seven Years War in North America. The main parties were Great Britain and its colonies against the French and their Indian allies. The main point of conflict was in the Ohio River Valley where each country fought for the control of the fur trade.

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In 1755, the French were winning the French and Indian War. There was a need for the protection of English territory menaced by the French. The proximity of the French to Nova Scotia and the debate over the loyalties of the Acadians was a source of worry for the British Governor Charles Lawrence who was responsible for guaranteeing the security of British interests in his territory. After the announcement of the declaration of the Seven Years War in 1756, the Acadians would probably have had to prove their loyalty. It is possible that Lawrence merely acted ahead of his time in the expulsion or that he was reacting to the rising political tension between Britain and France.<sup>26</sup> The French incursions into Nova Scotia in the area of Beauséjour, Chignecto, and on the River Saint-Jean alarmed Governor Lawrence and he felt they were threatening the security of New England.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 409.

<sup>25</sup> [http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia\\_761575656/Seven\\_Years%e2%80%99\\_War.html](http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761575656/Seven_Years%e2%80%99_War.html)

<sup>26</sup> Clark, *Acadia: The Geography*, 363.

<sup>27</sup> Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme*, 285-6.

## The Players: Motives and Means

### Governor Lawrence



Source: <http://www.girouard.org/cgi-bin/page.pl?file=lawrence&n=4>

Charles Lawrence was the lieutenant governor under Governor Hopson. The recall of Governor Hopson in 1753 gave Lawrence the rule of the colony but did not immediately promote him to Governor.<sup>28</sup> Lawrence came from a military family and continued that tradition when he began his military career at the age of 18. During his military career, Lawrence fought against the French. Lawrence was wounded at the Battle of Fontenoy in 1745. His previous experience prejudiced him against the Acadians because of their French descent. He did not develop a dislike for the French after he arrived in Nova Scotia but rather came to Nova Scotia with it.<sup>29</sup>

Lawrence was of the opinion that the previous governors had been too lenient in regards to forcing the Acadians to swear an oath of loyalty to England, including the provision to bear arms against England's enemies. According to him, this leniency was the root of the problem

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<sup>28</sup> Lauviere, *Tragedie d'un Peuple*, 387.

<sup>29</sup> Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme*, 281.

with the Acadians. He advocated that any Acadian who wished to remain in British territory would have to swear the unconditional oath and if not they would forfeit their land titles. Lawrence thought that the Acadians were not loyal to the British, but instead only cooperated with the British when it served their purpose and thus were loyal to the French.<sup>30</sup>

Lawrence's personal desires partly motivated his final decision to remove forcibly the Acadians in 1755. During his tenure as Lieutenant Governor, the Franco-British War was ongoing and tensions were high between England and France including in their overseas colonies. There was the constant threat of a French attack in the colony. If Lawrence would be able to secure the safety of the colony, it would reflect well upon him as a leader. As a result, Lawrence would be in a position to gain the governorship of the colony and possibly other career advancements.<sup>31</sup>

#### Governor Shirley

William Shirley was the governor of Massachusetts starting in the summer of 1753. His political views were similar to Governor Lawrence including his position on the Acadians. Governor Shirley supplied the troops necessary to conduct the expulsion, as Governor Lawrence did not have an adequate number of men. He was also involved planning the method by which the expulsion. Boston was a main stopping point for the ships filled with Acadians as they sailed down the coast to the other colonies.<sup>32</sup>

Shirley's motivation was more political than that of Lawrence. His main goal was the security of New England. His justification for the attack on Beauséjour was that there had been

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<sup>30</sup> Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme*, 282.

<sup>31</sup> John Bartlet Brebner, *New England's Outpost: Acadia before the Conquest of Canada* (original 1927 Hamden CT: Faculty of Political Science Columbia University, 1965), 206.

<sup>32</sup> Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme*, 296.

reports of a French and Micmak invasion into Maine.<sup>33</sup> He felt the only way to secure the northern colonies completely was to remove all Acadians from them.

Colonel Winslow



Source: <http://www.blupete.com/Hist/BiosNS/1700-63/Winslow.htm>

Colonel Winslow was the commander in charge of removing the Acadians at Grand Pré. He acted on orders from Governor Lawrence. Winslow was a highly organized man who kept detailed records of all of his communication with Lawrence and other officials as well as his personal observations. To fill in gaps in the official documents, the information from Winslow journals is useful as he copied into his journal all of the dispatches he received and sent.<sup>34</sup>

In contrast to Lawrence's hatred of the Acadians, Winslow sympathized with them. He felt revulsion at his task of rounding up the Acadians at Grand Pré as well as the expulsion on a general level. However, he did follow orders and participated in the suppression of the Acadian voice through the policies that he enacted.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 419.

<sup>34</sup> Faragher, *Great and Noble Scheme*, 337.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 337-46.

### Jonathan Belcher

Jonathan Belcher was the Chief Justice in Nova Scotia. He arrived in Halifax just before the expulsion in 1754 and was unfamiliar with the details of the conflict. The Board of Trade had refereed Governor Lawrence to Belcher to judge the legality of expelling the Acadians. Instead of forming his own opinions on the Acadians he deferred to the ideas of Governor Lawrence and was thus for the expulsion of the Acadians.<sup>36</sup>

Belcher wrote the justification of the expulsion in support of Governor Lawrence. Governor Lawrence requested the defense even though there was little to no legal basis for his actions.<sup>37</sup> In the spring of 1756, the defense was distributed. His defense used generalizations and statements without factual proof. The defense accused the Acadians of supporting the French since the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. It also stated that the Acadians disobeyed orders from his British Majesty. The British attributed the lack of growth, in terms of the numbers of Protestant settlers, to the presence of the Acadians.<sup>38</sup>

### Le Loutre and Daudin

Abbé Le Loutre and Abbé Daudin were two Roman Catholic priests who preached to the Acadians in North America. Le Loutre worked in Beauséjour and Daudin was in Pisiquid. They were both responsible to the Bishop of Quebec. The British expelled Le Loutre from the colony for agitating the Acadians against them. He returned to the area in 1753.<sup>39</sup> Daudin and Le Loutre were friends, so they saw Daudin as being an agitator against the British as well. The British officials distrusted them; they credited Daudin and Le Loutre both with attempting to set

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<sup>36</sup> Faragher, *Great and Noble Scheme*, 298, 320.

<sup>37</sup> Brebner, *New England's Outpost*, 224.

<sup>38</sup> Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 464.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 423, 434.

the Micmak and the Acadians against the British.<sup>40</sup> In the colony Council notes of May 18, 1736, the Council members accused the French missionaries, priests such as Daudin and Le Loutre, of provoking disloyalty in the Acadians. Lawrence ordered them to stop, but there is no evidence of enforcement and thus the orders were ineffective in controlling the opinions of the people.<sup>41</sup>

Le Loutre was not only the priest in Beauséjour, but was widely regarded as the power behind the French lines. During his tenure in the Chignecto region, the fort commanders were too corrupt or too ill to function as leaders. Le Loutre was able to fill the void in power and thus exert complete control over the Acadians. His main source of power came from his position on the pulpit. He was able to threaten the Acadians in religious terms. He campaigned for the defense of the Catholic religion through resistance to the alleged Protestant corruption by the British. This meant that people needed to avoid the corrupting British influence and not live on lands under their control. He used religious, political, and physical threats to keep the Acadians from returning to their former lands in British territory remaining behind French lines.<sup>42</sup>

Daudin was active in encouraging Acadians to move from British territory into French territory. Daudin took the blame for the Acadian resistance against British orders to help support the troops and forts. The Captain of Fort Edward reported that the Acadians had been refusing to provide necessary wood supplies to the fort. He indicated that Daudin was responsible for the behavior of the Acadians.<sup>43</sup> Like Le Loutre, the British officials in Nova Scotia ordered Daudin to leave the colony for acts of sedition against the government.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 434.

<sup>41</sup> Akins, *Selections*, 105.

<sup>42</sup> Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme*, 291.

<sup>43</sup> Brebner, *New England's Outpost*, 211.

<sup>44</sup> Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 435-6.

### Board of Trade / Lords of Trade

The Lords of Trade made up the members of the Board of Trade. They governed from London. They were the power that had final decision-making power about the policies in Nova Scotia. They communicated to the various governors through letters. These letters included advice on policy enactment, policy itself, congratulation for achievements, criticisms, and general commentary on the running of the colony. The letters did not always have constructive advice or answer the questions of the governors. This meant the governors themselves made many of the policies and small decisions and were independent of the Board of Trade.

The Board of Trade appointed the rulers in Nova Scotia. They had to approve and appoint the governors and lieutenant governors. They chose how long a person ruled and when they called them back to England. This meant that there was no set guaranteed time-period with in which a governor ruled. This may have contributed to the problems in the colony because the rule was always uncertain and changing.

The governors informed the Board of Trade of the events that happened in the colony. Based off that information, the Board of Trade made all their decisions. However, the governors did not always inform the Board of events in a timely manner. The Governors could withhold information to enact their own policies or to keep an event from reflecting poorly on them.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Akins, *Selections*.

## **The Expulsion of 1755**

### The Years Leading up to 1755

In the years that Lieutenant Governor Lawrence was in power in Nova Scotia, starting in 1753, there was increased hostility toward the Acadians on an official level. Lawrence stated to the Board of Trade in December of 1753 that the Acadians were argumentative and desired to keep their property. He gave them no legal recourse for hearing after seizure of their possessions because they had not sworn an unconditional oath of loyalty and thus had no legal rights. Lawrence would allow people to solve disputes over land in the Acadian community, but would not allow the appearance that the Acadians could keep land titles. He allowed mediators to enter into the Acadian community as a measure to keep the Acadians from defecting to the French.<sup>46</sup>

The legality of the Acadians land titles was an obsession for the New Englanders, Governor Lawrence in particular. In 1713, the Acadians were given land titles but they had since outgrown them. The British only recognized legal land titles but the Acadians considered ownership through family ties and presence.<sup>47</sup> In a communication from 1754, the Board of Trade told Governor Lawrence that the Acadians should not be given their legal land titles until they had sworn an unconditional oath. Yet, the Board of Trade still advised caution because it did not want the Acadians to return to the French. Governor Lawrence would take the first half of the order seriously, but he had his own interpretation of the second.

The obsession over the land came from jealousy of the Acadians. The Acadians possessed the most fertile land in the region. This meant that Protestant settlers that the British thought necessary for a prosperous colony could not use it.<sup>48</sup> The British thought that the

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<sup>46</sup> Akins, *Selections*, 205-7.

<sup>47</sup> Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 424.

<sup>48</sup> Lauviere, *La Tragédie d'un Peuple*, 385.

Acadians were lazy and not making proper use of it. This was because of the lack of economic development that the British saw. While the Acadians were satisfied with producing not much more than what they needed, the British wanted to focus more on taxable exports.<sup>49</sup> However, the French view of the Acadians was that, “les Acadiens ne mesure pas par l’argent mais du fruit de leurs labours.”<sup>50</sup>

The Acadians were aware of the precariousness of their situation. In late 1754, they wrote a letter to King Louis XIV informing him of the measures taken in Nova Scotia against them. They stated that they had been abiding by the terms of the Treaty of Utrecht but that their treatment was not. They were uneasy about having to swear an unconditional oath rather than the qualified oath of previous generations. The new conditions of the oath that Governor Cornwallis, of Nova Scotia, wished to force the Acadians to swear were disagreeable to the Acadians.

Governor Cornwallis did not want priests in British territory that were loyal to the French king and government. He wanted to force the priests to swear an oath of loyalty to the British king before allowing them into his territory; the priests were unwilling to do so. Under the Treaty of Utrecht, the priests were arraigned and responsible to the Bishop of Quebec. The Acadians perceived this as a violation of the treaty because it curtailed their freedom of religion. Cornwallis was determined to keep the priests out without the oath thus depriving the Acadians of their religious guidance.<sup>51</sup>

The new terms of Governor Lawrence also insisted that the Acadians were to bear arms in the defense of British interests. In specific, they were to fight against the Indians. The

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<sup>49</sup> Akins, *Selections*, 41.

<sup>50</sup> “The Acadians do not measure by money but rather the fruits of their labor” Lauviere, *La Tragedie d’un Peuple*, 180.

<sup>51</sup> Akins, *Selections*, 233-4.

Acadians resisted this measure because of their longstanding good relationships with the Micmak that they did not wish to jeopardize.<sup>52</sup>

The Acadian relationship with the Micmak dated back to their first days in Acadia. Many original Acadians had intermarried with the Micmak and thus had extended family ties. Many of the Micmak had become Catholic as well. This might have been a reason why the Acadians were not willing to betray them; it would have been betrayal of their religious brothers. The New Englanders accused the Acadians of failing to report the movements of the Micmak. This meant that the Micmak could move relatively freely in Acadian areas, and this was probably a source of worry for the government.<sup>53</sup>

The Acadians asked King Louis XIV to speak with the king of Great Britain and have him rescind the demands of Cornwallis. They wanted to retain their freedom of religion, to be exempt from military service, and have the right to leave the colony with their possessions for one year with the starting date being the ratification of the treaty.<sup>54</sup> The new treaty would be very similar to the Treaty of Utrecht. Based on the past behavior of the Acadians, it is not clear if they would have left or if they would have stayed.

The thinking of the British in Nova Scotia was two-fold. They rationalized the removal of Acadian rights and the forthcoming expulsion by the need for the security of the colony against the French. This was linked to the need to form an English colony populated with Protestants. The official word from the Lords of Trade in England in late 1754 was that the French had bases at Beauséjour, Bay Verte, and St. Johns, which prevented new Protestant settlements from forming. According to the Lords of Trade, the formation of a new English

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<sup>52</sup> Akins, *Selections*, 233-4.

<sup>53</sup> Clark, *Acadia: the Geography*, 361.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 234.

settlement should not occur until the New Englanders had succeeded in driving out both the French and the Micmak.<sup>55</sup>

The postponement of the English settlement until the French were gone was a major factor in the plans of Governor Lawrence and Governor Shirley. The Lords of Trade did not specify whether the French included the Acadians in Nova Scotia or people still living in French territory and left it up to the governors to decide. The rights of Acadians as citizens were unclear and thus open for interpretation as the governors saw fit. Did the Lords of Trade order Governor Lawrence to expel the Acadians, or did he overreach his authority? The answer depends entirely on the definition of the Acadian citizenship.

#### Thoughts/Reason in early 1755

Governor Lawrence first brought the force of the British military and politics against the Acadians at Beauséjour. The fort of Beauséjour capitulated June 16, 1755. The planning of the attack had started earlier in 1754 between Governors Lawrence and Shirley. Troops from New England constituted the force that conquered the fort. The joint military action was an effort to secure the areas of Nova Scotia and New England from French incursions and threats. The area and people of Beauséjour were a threat in part because they were in French controlled territory. The people there were suspect of aiding the Micmak in their fight against the British through the buying of supplies.<sup>56</sup>

Many Acadians, about 300 men, had moved to Beauséjour to work on the construction of the fort as well as to improve the dyke system there to make more land farmable.<sup>57</sup> However,

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<sup>55</sup> Clark, *Acadia: the Geography*, 235.

<sup>56</sup> Akins, *Selections*, 209.

<sup>57</sup> Lauviere, *Tragedie d'un Peuple*, 446.

Lawrence had not granted them permission to leave so they lost their rights as citizens in Nova Scotia as well as their land. They had been convinced to leave by Abbé Le Loutre with the threat that they would suffer under British rule. There is also an implication of the religious aspect that they were betraying their faith if they did not move to Catholic lands. Le Loutre threatened that the Acadians would be eternally damned if they betrayed their faith by remaining in land that was not controlled by the Church.<sup>58</sup>

Governor Lawrence gained the approval of the Lords of Trade for the recall of all Acadians at Beauséjour who were former residents of British territory. If they refused, they lost their citizenship and land. These Acadians came primarily from the Pisiquid and Minas regions. Governor Lawrence pardoned some of the Acadians at Beauséjour. Those who had fought and those remaining French at Beauséjour were expelled from the colony.<sup>59</sup> Lawrence also wanted to chase out of the area the families who had settled around Beauséjour, about 800 people in total.<sup>60</sup> In the capitulation agreement the word “pardonnée” or pardoned was included. To the British this simply meant pardon from the death sentence. To the Acadians it meant a pardon of all their actions, and thus a return of full rights as citizens.<sup>61</sup>

The Acadians testified to the machinations of Abbé Le Loutre before the Council in Halifax on October 9, 1754. Acadian families who were petitioning for permission to return to their homes in Pisiquid were present. They stated that they had only left their homes in British territory because of the influence of Le Loutre and his threats of suffering under British rule.

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<sup>58</sup> Akins, *Selections*, 213.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 235, 243.

<sup>60</sup> Lauviere, *Tragedie d'un Peuple*, 446.

<sup>61</sup> Akins, *Selections*, 283.

When they had failed to see the mistreatment, that Le Loutre had prophesized they said they could no longer resist their attachment to their land and decided to return to Pisiquid.<sup>62</sup>

Governor Lawrence allowed these specific Acadians to return because they volunteered to take the unconditional oath to Great Britain. The desire was that the other Acadians would follow the example and swear the unconditional oath as well. Since they had volunteered to take the oath and it was not forced, Lawrence hoped that the other Acadians would see that there would not be negative effects of the oath and thus comply with the order to take the oath.<sup>63</sup> The Lords of Trade gave Governor Lawrence approval of his declaration that all Acadians who had left Minas and Pisiquid to work at Beauséjour must return to British territory.<sup>64</sup> The remaining Acadians and French at Beauséjour were ordered out of the colony.<sup>65</sup>

The lack of defined Acadians citizenship created problems such as the rationalization of Acadian aid to Beauséjour. The Acadians retained their French culture, language, and religion and were only British on a legal level. The confusion about citizenship increased because of the fact that the separation from extended family was by an artificial political division, the Treaty of Utrecht. Their intense value of family ties on an extended level prevented them from being absorbed into British culture and renouncing all French ideals. This retained French behavior is at the center of the Acadian conflict in Nova Scotia. If the Acadians had sworn an unconditional oath of Great Britain, they would be required to bear arms against the French. In Nova Scotia, the bearing of arms would have meant fighting between members of the same family, an idea too barbaric and incomprehensible for them to bear.

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<sup>62</sup> Akins, *Selections*, 228.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 230-1.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 235.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 243.

After the capture of Beauséjour, Governor Lawrence began a systematic removal of the rights, the privileges, and the property of the Acadians. Lawrence eventually removed the Acadians of their guns, boats, citizenship and land rights. In late 1754, the Lords of Trade gave Governor Lawrence official permission to seek out and start the legal options against the Acadians that migrated to Beauséjour. Governor Lawrence had permission to remove these Acadians of their land rights in British Nova Scotia.<sup>66</sup>

Because of Beauséjour, inhabitants in Pisiquid and Minas also lost certain rights. The British suspected them of provisioning the French at Beauséjour. Because of this, the British seized their boats and guns. This was to prevent the movement of supplies and people by water into French territory. In addition, the British did not want the Acadians to be able to bear arms against them.

In memorials to the Council of Nova Scotia, the Acadians of Pisiquid and Minas asked for the return of their possessions. They argued that they needed their boats, not to escape but for their livelihood as they fished to support their families. They asked for the guns back because they needed them for the protection of their livestock and family against wild animals. The Acadians wrote, “It is not guns which an inhabitant possesses, that will induce him to revolt, nor the privation of the same guns that will make him more faithful; but his conscience alone must induce him to maintain his oath”.<sup>67</sup> The Acadians had not violated their oath and thus felt that they were being unfairly victimized for others actions.

The British ignored these memorials for three main reasons. The first was that the French had a presence in the Bay of Fundy. With the French so close to British territory, it would be easier for the Acadians to migrate unmolested to French territory with their possessions. This

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<sup>66</sup> Akins, *Selections*, 235.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 248.

would enrich the French in goods, men, and arms while depleting the British of needed resources at a vulnerable moment.<sup>68</sup> The second reason was that the British found the wording of the memorials to be insolent. They felt that the closer the French troops got the more insolent the Acadians became. The British would never tell the Acadians the location of the French troops and thus they must be receiving intelligence from the other side. If the Acadians were getting information it would follow that they were also giving information.<sup>69</sup> The third reason was legal. According to British law, which applied to Great Britain and all the colonies, no Roman Catholic could own arms. Therefore, Governor Lawrence was only upholding the law when he removed the guns of the Acadians. The rationale was that the removal of the guns was not because the British distrusted the Acadians but because of their religion.<sup>70</sup>

#### Details of the Expulsion

On July 4, 1755, the Council minutes note that a group of Acadians appeared before the Council. The Acadians again refused to take an unqualified oath saying that the original oaths sufficed. They insisted on retaining the qualifications of freedom of religion and that they would not have to bear arms for the British. Part of their insistence was that they feared reprisal from the Micmak if they agreed to fight for the British. The minutes note that, “They had often urged that the Indians would annoy them if they did not Assist them...”<sup>71</sup> It is possible that this meant serious reprisal against the Acadians or harmless annoyances. The obscurity of the threats could have been a contributing factor as to why Governor Lawrence was unwilling to allow the Acadians to have their firearms back.

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<sup>68</sup> Akins, *Selections*, 250.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 252.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 252.

Governor Lawrence, conscious of his victory at Beauséjour, was unwilling to allow matters to stay as they were. He broke the stalemate between the Acadians and his government. To Governor Lawrence the refusal of an unqualified oath was the same as a refusal of any oath. Because of this refusal, Lawrence declared that they were no longer British citizens.<sup>72</sup>

According to an act of British Parliament, once an oath is refused the person cannot decide later to swear the same oath. Without the oath, the Acadians present at Halifax, were no longer British subjects but were rather French subjects. Their treatment was as French subjects, which meant they were to be removed from the colony. The removal of citizenship only applied to the Acadians physically before the council; Governor Lawrence allowed that the rest of the Acadians still had the option to swear the unconditional oath.<sup>73</sup>

Governor Lawrence informed the Board of Trade in a letter dated July 18, 1755 that the Acadians had refused to take the oath. Their removal from the British colony was necessary and their destination was France. Until the final arrangements of their departure were completed, Governor Lawrence had arrangements to keep the twenty-four men prisoner so that they could not flee or hide among the Acadians.<sup>74</sup>

Shortly after Governor Lawrence's letter to the Board of Trade, a second group of representatives from Minas and Pisiquid sent a second memorial to the Council. In this memorial, they claimed to speak for all the Acadians of their regions. They agreed to surrender all of their arms to the commanding officer in their region. However, they still insisted on not swearing an unconditional oath. They felt that their previous oath sufficed and that a new oath was unneeded. In their memorial, the Acadians stated that they would rather leave the colony

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<sup>72</sup> Akins, *Selections*, 256.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 250.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 260.

than swear to the new oath. They would leave voluntarily if they were allowed adequate time so that they could bring their possessions with them.<sup>75</sup>

The Acadian representatives from Minas and Pisiquid came before the Council in the end of July 1755 when ordered to do so. They repeated that they would not take an unconditional oath. The representatives affirmed that they spoke for all the Acadians of their region not just themselves as the first group had. Following the same logic Governor Lawrence had used on the first group of representatives, all the Acadians lost their citizenship and became French subjects. As French subjects, they were all to be deported from the colony.<sup>76</sup>

The representatives, as well as the other men from the area, were detained as ordered until transport could be arraigned. The mass deportation plans were a secret so that the Acadians could not flee before the British troops arrived to arrest them. The men were separate from the women and children until then. This would keep the women and children close to the men. It would deter them from joining the French in Canada. When the transports arrived, there would be fewer problems in deporting all the Acadians since they were located in groups.<sup>77</sup>

The removal of the land rights of the Acadians came at the same time as their citizenship. In order to gain provisions for the men, the British troops could take the grain and livestock from the Acadian farms. After the removal of the Acadians, the troops were to destroy all the houses and boats and seize the cattle. The purpose was two fold: to keep the Acadians from returning and to prevent the French from spying. If there was no way to get food or shelter, the French would not be able to gain information about the British movements.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Akins, *Selections*, 261-262.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 263-269.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 267-269.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 267-269.

One method of ensuring the detainment of all the Acadian men was to call a village meeting. The men were required to go to the churches for these meetings. Once there, the British read the orders of the Governor Lawrence that they were to be held until the ships arrived and then they were to be deported en masse. An example of this tactic was at Grand Pré under the control of Colonel Wilson. The exact words of Colonel Wilson were,

...I shall deliver you His Majesty's orders and instructions: That your Lands and Tenements, Cattle of all kinds, and livestock of all sorts are forfeited to the Crown with al other [of] your Effects, saving your Money and Household Goods. And that you yourselves are to be removed from this province...<sup>79</sup>

To create an aura of legitimacy the orders used phrases about the authority of the king seven times!<sup>80</sup>

A second implementation of this strategy was evident at Cumberland. The Acadians were summoned to the church on the pretense that it was a discussion about the return of their land. Nevertheless, many Acadian men did not attend the meeting; only about one third did. The rest fled into the woods. After the detention of some of the Acadians, many were outraged at their treatment. They felt that the treatment was like that of slaves and not citizens.<sup>81</sup>

Another dispute was that the requirement women had to supply the detained men with food, blankets, and clothes. If the women fled then there would be no one to give the men food, causing them to starve.<sup>82</sup> It is unlikely that the women would flee if their sons and husbands would die because of their actions. The men did not bring any food or provisions with which to stay the night. The British did not provide anything for them; this lack probably included even

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<sup>79</sup> Faragher, *Great and Noble Scheme*, 344.

<sup>80</sup> Lauviere, *La Tragédie d'un Peuple*, 464.

<sup>81</sup> Faragher, *Great and Noble Scheme*, 339.

<sup>82</sup> Lauviere, *La Tragédie d'un Peuple*, 467-8

the first night before the families could arrange meals. The Acadians saw this as unchristian like treatment and unwarranted.<sup>83</sup>

The plans for the Expulsion first appear in the Council minutes for July 28, 1755. The wording of the minutes suggests that the planning of the Expulsion had begun long before the representatives from Minas and Pisiquid arrived. The same minutes that contain their memorials also contain the decision to expel all Acadians from Nova Scotia. The minutes end with,

After mature Consideration, it was unanimously Agreed That, to prevent as much as possible their Attempting to return and molest the Settlers that may be set down on their Lands, it would be most proper to send them to be distributed amongst the several Colonies on the Continent, and that a sufficient Number of Vessels should be hired will all possible Expedition for that purpose.<sup>84</sup>

Governor Lawrence must have deliberated the fate of all the Acadians in detail before he sent the July letter to the Lords of Trade. However, his letter contains no indication of his plans to expel all the Acadians. It appears that Governor Lawrence kept the true situation in Nova Scotia a secret from the Lords of Trade. Even if Governor Lawrence had written of his plans to the Lords of Trade in July their instructions would probably have arrived too late to be of any encouragement or discouragement. To get a letter from Halifax to London it took 50 days. To get a letter from London to Halifax took 30 days. In order for the Lords of Trade to have stopped Governor Lawrence he could not have acted until almost three months later.<sup>85</sup> It is possible that with faster communication between Nova Scotia and England the expulsion may not have happened, because of the lack of approval by the Lords of Trade, or that the manner in which the expulsion happened would have been more humane.

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<sup>83</sup> Faragher, *Great and Noble Scheme*, 339.

<sup>84</sup> Akins, *Selections*, 267.

<sup>85</sup> Faragher, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 424.

Governor Lawrence did not wait three months before beginning his expulsion of the Acadians. Instead, he took immediate action and sent a letter, dated July 31, to Colonel Monckton at Chignecto instructed him to round up immediately the male citizens of the area, in particular the heads of families. He sent identical letters to the Fort at Pisiquid and the garrison at Annapolis Royal. Governor Lawrence specifically mentioned that the expulsion was to be kept as secret as possible to prevent the Acadians from fleeing with their possessions. Following that order, Lawrence mentioned that there was to be no purchasing of Acadian possessions, such as cattle, but rather seized as repartitions for the cost of the expulsion. The only things that Acadians could take with them were “ready money and household furniture”.<sup>86</sup>

Shortly after the seizure of the Acadians had begun, Governor Lawrence learned that the French had attacked a British commander and that they British had been defeated. This probably served to intensify the need for the removal of the Acadians in the mind of Governor Lawrence. The commanders in charge of the round up of the Acadians were advised to keep the news from the Acadians.<sup>87</sup> Lawrence probably gave this order so that the Acadians would not rebel or look for a rescue from the French forces.

In August, Governor Lawrence gave an order that further reduced the possibility of French intervention for the Acadians remaining in the colony. His original orders included the destruction of all the villages and boats in the area north of Chignecto.<sup>88</sup> The new orders repeated this and included the directive to work to disrupt and find the Acadians who had fled into the woods. The British suspected these Acadians of spying for the French.<sup>89</sup> The

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<sup>86</sup> Akins, *Selections*, 260.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 269.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 270.

overarching policy was scorched earth. As the soldiers advanced and removed the remaining Acadians, they burnt all the villages including the churches.<sup>90</sup>

In August, the ships sent to carry off the Acadians started to arrive. Governor Lawrence gave specific instructions on how much food each inhabitant was to receive and how many were to go to each destination. From the area of Minas 500 Acadians were to go to North Carolina, 1,000 to Virginia, and 500 to Maryland. From the Annapolis area, 300 were to go to Philadelphia, 200 to New York, 300 to Connecticut, and 200 to Boston.<sup>91</sup> However, these 3,000 people were less than half of the Acadians in Nova Scotia. Governor Lawrence estimated that number of Acadians in Nova Scotia was around 7,000. There are other estimates of the population that go to 8,000 meaning that the exact number of Acadians is unknown.<sup>92</sup>

Governor Lawrence had several reasons for not shipping the Acadians to France, Canada, or other French colonies, but rather shipping them to the British colonies. The first was that the Acadians would aid the French in fighting against the British if they sent them to French controlled areas. The rational was that in a time of war it was never a good idea to give the enemy new troops, much less troops angry with the people they were supposed to be fighting. The second reason is that the Acadians were still strong enough to work. They would provide a labor base for the other colonies and would strengthen the British in North America.<sup>93</sup> Lawrence wrote in a circular letter to the other governors that the reason for dispersing the Acadians was that it was, “the only practicable measure to divide them among the Colonies where they may be of some use, as most of them are healthy and strong”<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Lauviere, *La Tragédie d'un Peuple*, 452.

<sup>91</sup> Akins, *Selections*, 271-6.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 278.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 277.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 278.

The British saw the expulsion to the other colonies as a chance for the Acadians to become good British citizens. It was a chance for them to start fresh in a new place. Conversely, there were no provisions made in the new colonies to ensure they would become productive citizens. To the governors of the other colonies that the Acadians were being sent to the instructions were given were to “dispose of them in such manner as may best answer [the British] design in preventing their reunion”<sup>95</sup> Preventing the return of the Acadians was the main concern of Governor Lawrence.

A second concern of Governor Lawrence was the cost of the expulsion. To help cover the cost, as previously mentioned, the effects of the Acadians were seized. Governor Lawrence told the Board of Trade in October, his first communication with them since the expulsion began, that he had endeavored to hire the cheapest ships possible to transport the Acadians. He also planned to give the newly cleared land to new settlers. With the land in production again, the troops could supply with local food and the cost of running the colony would decrease. This also would strength the colony against the French and Micmak. Lawrence wrote to the Board of Trade the resettlement was, “...of the highest importance...to prevent the French resettling there, as well as to awe the Indians of that district”.<sup>96</sup>

The fear of Indian attacks was still present even with the Acadians gone from the colony. There were attacks on troops by groups of Micmak and Acadians working together. This possibly prevented the resettlement of the area because people were not willing to go into dangerous territory.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Akins, *Selections*, 278.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 281-2.

<sup>97</sup> Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme*, 406.

The expulsion was not over with the first round of ships. There were multiple sailings from Nova Scotia to the other colonies. As the British found the Acadians who had fled into the woods, they expelled them. This process lasted far past the initial expulsion in 1755. There are letters dated as late as 1757 from the Board of Trade mentioning the remaining Acadians in the colony.<sup>98</sup>

In 1756, the Lords of Trade gave retroactive approval to Governor Lawrence for his expulsion of the Acadians. By extension and implication, the King of England also gave his approval for the act because Lawrence's notices were given to the king. The letter from the Board of Trade states,

We have laid that part of your Letter which relates to the Removal of the French Inhabitants, and the Steps you took in the Execution of this Measure, before His Majesty's Secretary of State; and as you represent it to have been indispensably necessary for the Security and Protection of the Province in the present critical situation of our affairs. We doubt not but that your Conduct herein will meet with His Majesty's Approbation.<sup>99</sup>

The defeat of the French at Beauséjour was seen as the biggest victory for the British at the time. The British had suffered many defeats and Beauséjour was their only victory up to that point.<sup>100</sup>

In total, there were several different expulsions. As the British discovered the Acadians that fled into the woods, they deported the Acadians. After Canada capitulated in September of 1759, there was another expulsion. The British were never fully able to remove the Acadians but they were able to achieve their goals of a British settlement. The Acadian land was available to new settlers in 1758. The first session of the Nova Scotia Assembly declared that the Acadians

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<sup>98</sup> Akins, *Selections*, 298.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 298.

had never had the legal land titles. They also made it illegal for Catholics to own land or hold public office.<sup>101</sup>

The Acadians that remained were in labor camps. Many worked to repair the dykes that they had originally built. The irony was that the very skills that the British needed to make the land inhabitable for the new settlers were the skills that the Acadians possessed.<sup>102</sup> The expulsion officially ended in September 1764. The remaining Acadians were allowed to stay if they swore an oath and fidelity.

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<sup>101</sup> Faragher, *Great and Noble Scheme*, 406-7.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, 418-419.

### **The Acadian's Exile**

The conditions of the deportation of the Acadians were harsh. The official report of Massachusetts found that the boats were extremely overcrowded. There was not adequate room on board for people to be able to lie down. In addition, the boats lacked sufficient necessities like food and facilities.<sup>103</sup>

In total about 7,000 people were deported from Nova Scotia. It is estimated that about 1,000 of these people died in transport to the new colonies. This figure does not include the very likely large number of Acadians who died once they reached the colonies.<sup>104</sup>

Once the Acadians arrived in the colonies, their treatment varied. In Massachusetts, the government supported the Acadians through the winter with shelter, food, and clothes. The government expected the Acadians to be self-supporting by the spring.<sup>105</sup> In Maryland the Acadians were the responsibility of private philanthropy and not the colonial government. Because of this, there was a further separation of many families since they were sent to many counties to be supported. In Maryland, many Acadians had to beg to survive. Many were imprisoned as indigents and their children sent away to different families.<sup>106</sup>

Putting the children into Service shocked the Acadians. This was a form of forced labor. The labor ranged from farm work to sailing to spinning, for the girls. In general, the children were sent far away from their families. The children that experienced this came from families that were having difficulties or were unable to support them. The Acadian community strongly

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<sup>103</sup> Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme*, 370.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 372.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 374.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 375-375.

resisted this practice because they placed a high level of importance on the family, including the extended family.<sup>107</sup>

In certain places, the Acadians insisted on treatment as prisoners of war. Governor Lawrence had declared that they were no longer British citizens, but rather French. Since the two countries were at war and the Acadians were there involuntarily, it is a logical move to make. The Acadians in Philadelphia and Virginia made this demand. It was largely ignored because Governor Lawrence had implied to the other governors that the Acadians were still British citizens.<sup>108</sup>

Almost as soon as the Acadians reached their new colonies, they started seeking ways to return to Nova Scotia. The main movement started in Georgia. The governor there had not given permission for the boat containing the Acadians to land, but the captain had left them there anyway in December of 1755. The governor was not precise about how to get rid of them. The Acadians were able to leave Georgia in March of 1756 in a legal manner.<sup>109</sup>

The governor of Georgia gave a head of an Acadian family a passport to use to travel, he could use it for legal passage of his entire family including extended family members such as aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents. The Acadian family then bought a boat and proceeded to sail north, back to their homeland. The extended family was very large consisting of about 150 people!<sup>110</sup>

When the boat from Georgia arrived in South Carolina, the governor permitted them to land unbothered. Inspired by this practice the governor issued passports to the Acadian in his colony. From South Carolina, about 600 more Acadians joined the journey north. There were

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<sup>107</sup> Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme*, 377-378.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 377, 381.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 385-386.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

reports that many Acadians made it back to Nova Scotia. However, there were also Acadians who were detained in New York and then forced to Boston.<sup>111</sup>

When Governor Lawrence heard that the Acadians were being allowed to freely travel north, he was angered by the disregard for the safety and security of his colony. In a circular to the governors on the continent dated July 1, 1756 Governor Lawrence wrote, “I think it is my indispensable duty to entreat your Excellency to use your utmost endeavors to prevent the accomplishment of so pernicious an undertaking by destroying such vessels as those in your Colony may have prepared for that purpose”. He went on to stress “...how fatal the return of those people is likely to prove to His Majesty’s interest in this part of the world”<sup>112</sup>

Governor Lawrence also wrote to the Lords of Trade informing them of what the other governors had allowed to happen. In March of 1757, the Board of Trade wrote informing Governor Lawrence that they disapproved of the southern colonies allowing the Acadian movement.<sup>113</sup>

Some of the Acadians were sent to England to be dealt with. The main group of Acadians that went to England went through Virginia. They were sent to different English port towns in groups of 250-350 in May 1756. Just like their arrival in the southern colony, the Acadians arrived in England unannounced. In England the mistreatment of the Acadians continued, as there was not adequate housing or sufficient funds for the Acadians to survive.<sup>114</sup>

The French response to the deportation was delayed and ineffective. They filed a formal protest in the fall of 1756. There is no indication that this ameliorated the situation of the Acadians in North America or England. In 1758, a group of Acadians left England and went to

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<sup>111</sup> Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme*, 386-387.

<sup>112</sup> Akins, *Selections*, 303.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 304.

<sup>114</sup> Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme*, 381-382.

France. After the Peace of Paris France made plans for all Acadians in England to be returned to France.<sup>115</sup>

From their original points of exile, the Acadians ended up in two main places. The first is back in Nova Scotia where they were needed to repair the dyke system. They were allowed to form new settlements as long as they took a new oath. The second place is New Orleans. To get there many Acadians went first to Haiti. However, they found life to harsh there and moved to New Orleans where the land was more like Nova Scotia. In the end of 1765, the first group of Acadians arrived in New Orleans. By the end of the eighteenth century, there were about 4,000 Acadians there. Eventually these people became the Cajuns.<sup>116</sup>

The memory of this event is remembered in the public at large through the poem "Evangeline" and through songs of the Cajuns. One example of this is the song "Réveille" by Zachary Richard. In his song he wrote, "Réveille, réveille, /C'est les goddams qui viennent, /Voler la récolte. /Réveille, réveille,/ Hommes acadiens, /Pour sauver le village."<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme*, 383, 422.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 431-6.

<sup>117</sup> Zachary Richard, "Réveille", <http://www.zacharyrichard.com/lyrics/reveille.html>, accessed May 8, 2008. "Wake up, wake up/ The Goddamns are coming/ stealing the harvest. / Wake up, wake up, Acadian men/ to save the village".

### **Conclusion**

Over the course of nine years, the Acadian people were victimized, hunted down like animals, and forcibly removed from the only place they had ever known. The conditions of their forced removal, or as the euphemism goes, Le Grand Dérangement, were cruel and inhumane by most standards. The main objective of the British government was not to peaceably deal with the Acadians, who were citizens by birth if not by blood, but to deal with them in the quickest manner possible.

The love of the Acadians for their land and their suspicion of the British are the two main reasons that the expulsion was not successful. The British never planned on the fact that the Acadians would do anything in their ability to return to their homeland. This tale shows how the irrationality of the human spirit can overcome the rational actions of man. The planning of the British could never fully encompass the results of the Acadian expulsion.

In the end, neither side won. There were still Acadians in Nova Scotia but the Acadians still lost their homeland. Today they are scattered all over the Atlantic but they retain some of their distinct culture even today. For example, there are French speaking Acadian universities in Canada, there are traces of the Acadians left in South Carolina, and most notably there are the Cajuns in New Orleans.

The historiography of this event falls under two categories, the international extending into Nova Scotia or the history of the American frontier. The international aspect is that the wars in Europe and the French-Indian war were the reason for the expulsion. While this is true to an extent, there is also the very large element of the decisions made in Nova Scotia. Because the outside contributed to the Acadian expulsion, it also cannot be simply an American frontier

story. I have used a mix of these two interpretations. The governors of Nova Scotia were the direct reason for the expulsion but they were influenced by world events. Neither the war alone nor the governors alone could have brought about the expulsion; it is only by taking into account these two theories that the Acadian expulsion can fully be explained.

Many works focus primarily on the time before the expulsion or the Acadians journey after the expulsion. In this paper, I made a link between the two foci to help further develop the story of the Acadians.

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### Primary Source

Akins D.C.I. Thomas B. ed., Benjamin Curren D.C.I. trans., *Selections from the Public Documents of Nova Scotia*. Halifax NS: Charles Annad, 1869.

This source is a collection of governmental minutes and papers from Halifax Nova Scotia. These are the main basis of my paper. The papers give a very detailed account of the official proceedings of the Council in Halifax Nova Scotia. Since it is a selection of the documents it is probably that some documents that would have been beneficial to me were not included in the collection.

### Secondary Sources

Brebner, John Bartlet. *New England's Outpost: Acadia before the Conquest of Canada*. original 1927 Hamden CT: Faculty of Political Science Columbia University, 1965.

This book gives many different theories for the actions of the Acadians and the British. I used this source to show different perspectives of the actions of both sides.

Clark, Andrew. *Acadia: The Geography of Early Nova Scotia to 1769*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968.

This book gives the details of the Acadian expulsion and the history of the Acadians in Nova Scotia. This book is similar to the Faragher book but was less useful because of its lack of specific details, and the relatively small amount of time spent on the expulsion itself. I used this book to make a comparison on how the perspective of the Acadian story changed from the books in the 1920s to the current scholarship.

Faragher, John Mack. *A Great and Noble Scheme: The Tragic Story of the Expulsion of the French Acadians from their American Homeland*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2005.

This book is a very detailed account of Acadian history starting with the founding of the colony and finishing with the end of the expulsion. I used this book for the majority of my background information as well as to give my interpretation a historiographical setting.

Gallant, Abbé Patrice. *Les Acadiens de Saint-Pierre & Miquelon à la Rochelle 1767 à 1768 et 1778 à 1781*. Moncton New Brunswick : Centre d'études acadiennes Université de Moncton, 1977.

This is a genealogical work on a specific group of families. I did not use this work in the paper because it was chronologically too late. It also references the families mainly by name, but I did not have access to the names of specific families in the expulsion.

"The Girouard Family: Charles Lawrence" <http://www.girouard.org/cgi-bin/page.pl?file=lawrence&n=4> (accessed April 8, 2008).

I used this website for the image of Charles Lawrence.

Griffiths, N.E.S. *From Migrant to Acadian: A North American Border People 1604-1755*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005.

This book was also very similar to the books by Faragher and Clark. Griffiths delves more into the French side of the story through his descriptions of the priests. I used this book similarly to the Faragher book.

Hargreaves, Alec G. *Memory, Empire and Postcolonialism: Legacies of French Colonialism*. New York: Lexington Books, 2005.

The work is an overview of the French empire and the effects that the empire had after it was dissolved. The focus of the book is mainly on the African or Caribbean colonies. I used this book mainly for background information on Acadia and the Acadians. It is a modern view of the Acadians that references Acadian authors.

Landry, Peter. "Biographies: John Winslow" <http://www.blupete.com/Hist/BiosNS/1700-63/Winslow.htm> (accessed April 8, 2008).

I used this website for the image of John Winslow.

Lauvrière, Emile. *La Tragedie d'un Peuple: Histoire du Peuple Acadien de ses origines à nos jours*. Paris: Ames et Chose, 1924.

This book was useful in giving the French perspective of the expulsion. The main flaw of the book is that it has a very heavy anti-English bias.

Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth. *Poems and Other Writings*. New York, NY: The Library of America, 2000.

I used this source for an introduction into the paper.

Microsoft® Encarta® Online Encyclopedia 2007 "Seven Years' War,"  
[http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia\\_761575656/Seven\\_Years%e2%80%99\\_War.html](http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761575656/Seven_Years%e2%80%99_War.html)  
 (accessed April 8, 2008).

I used this source for background information on the Seven Years' War. However it was not cited in the paper because it is difficult to verify the source of the information.

Richard, Zachary. "Réveille". <http://www.zacharyrichard.com/lyrics/reveille.html>, (accessed May 8, 2008).

I used this source for the lyrics to the song for the emphasis on new Acadians and remembrance in the conclusion.