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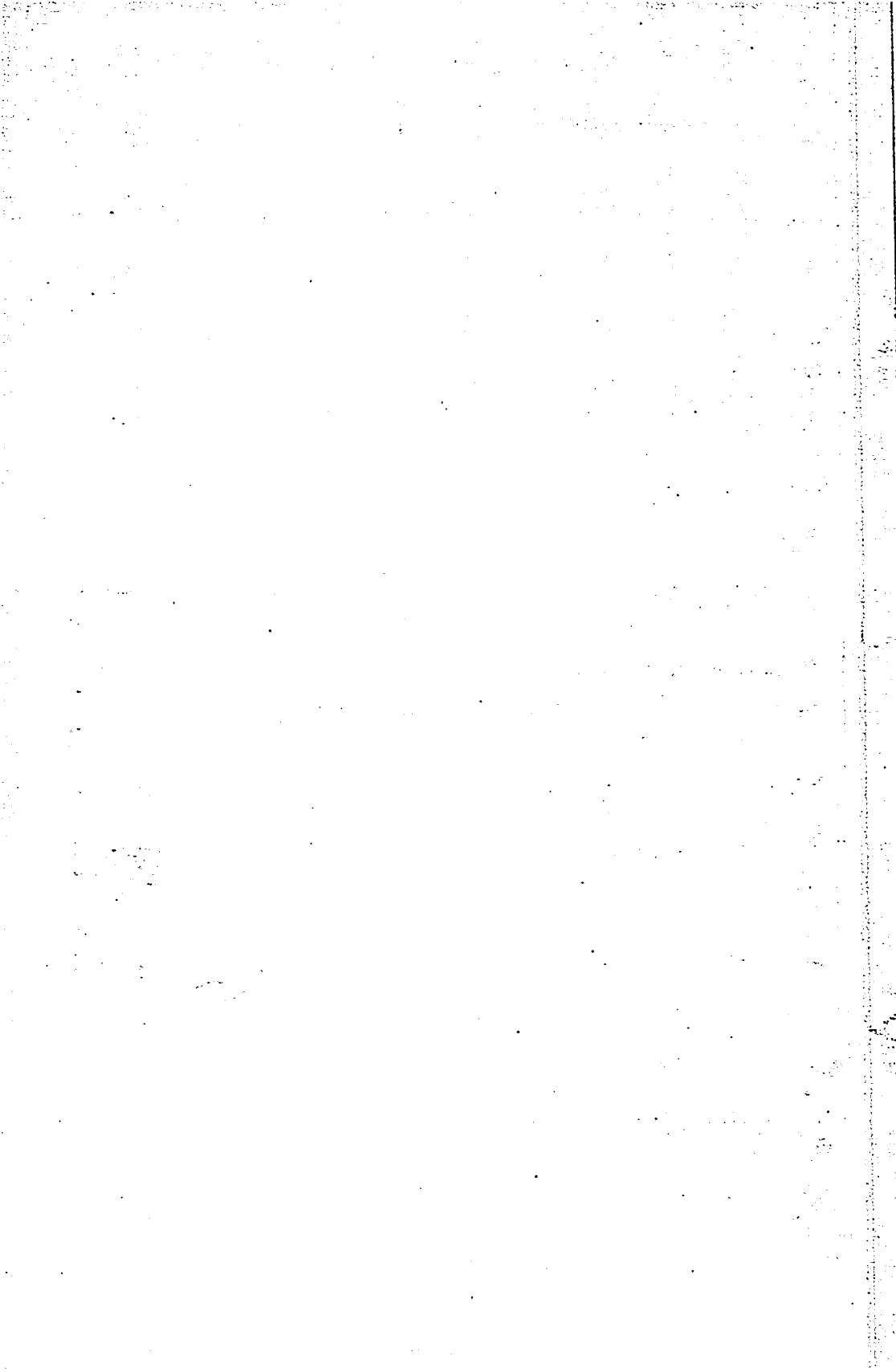


La Société historique académie

LES CAHIERS

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LA SOCIÉTÉ HISTORIQUE ACADIENNE

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Présentation

La colonie française de l'Île-Saint-Jean a connu une triste fin au lendemain de la chute de Louisbourg en 1758. Comme en 1755, le conquérant britannique a procédé à la déportation systématique de la population civile de l'île, principalement des Acadiens réfugiés là au cours de la dernière décennie. Earle Lockerby a déjà exploré ce triste événement, mais il s'est rendu compte qu'un scénario semblable a failli s'y produire treize ans plus tôt, soit au lendemain de la première chute de Louisbourg en 1745. C'est donc en vue de mieux faire connaître cet épisode de l'histoire de l'Île-Saint-Jean que monsieur Lockerby a compulsé les archives britanniques et françaises faisant état des principaux événements survenus là entre 1745 et 1747.

Dans un peu plus de deux ans, nous allons marquer le centenaire d'une des principales institutions acadiennes au XX^e siècle, la Société l'Assomption, connue aujourd'hui sous la raison sociale Assomption-Vie. Au moins deux études ont été consacrées à date à l'histoire de la Société l'Assomption et elles font état des origines de cette institution en Nouvelle-Angleterre. L'historien et archiviste Régis Brun vient de prendre connaissance du fonds d'archives de Clarence Cormier, un des fondateurs de cette société. Grâce aux richesses que recèlent ces archives, monsieur Brun nous fait découvrir les origines sociales de la Société l'Assomption. Il fait ressortir le rôle que des hommes comme Clarence Cormier et Jean LeBlanc entre autres, y ont joué.

Pour terminer, nous rendons hommage à deux Françaises acadiennes qui viennent de quitter ce monde. En outre, nous publions la liste de nos nouveaux adhérents de même que nos membres à vie.

La rédaction

Île-Saint-Jean in 1745-1747: Threats and Indulgences

Earle LOCKERBY

INTRODUCTION

The deportation in 1755 of some 6000-7000 Acadians from Acadia (i.e., peninsular Nova Scotia and the Chignecto area - about half of the population there) is an event which is indelibly etched in the psyche of the Acadian people. This event has been a powerful force in the shaping and development of an Acadian identity and culture. It is an element of history which binds together those of Acadian descent living not only in the Atlantic Provinces, but also in Louisiana, Québec and throughout North America. Like most major events, the deportation of 1755 has spawned its share of legends, a blending of fact with fiction, such as certain elements of the storyline in Longfellow's *Evangeline*. Over the past 125 years or so this deportation has been immensely controversial among historians, both French and English.

Though the deportation of 1755 is by far the most well known of the deportations of French and Acadians, there were roughly half a dozen waves of deportation of French-speaking residents of what are now the Maritime Provinces, spanning the 1745 to 1762 period.¹ These episodes of forcible removal occurred in the triangular area from Île-Royale or Cape Breton in the east to Cape Sable in the southwest to the Bay of Chaleur in the north; the area encompassed Prince Edward Island, then known to the French as Île-Saint-Jean. Those deported in 1745 and 1758 were French subjects to whom applied the articles of capitulation agreed by French and British military officials. A distinguishing feature of the 1755 deportation

1. During the period 1763-67 there were several sizable groups of Acadians which left Nova Scotia. These migrations were largely at their own volition.

is that the deportees were British subjects who were not a recently conquered people subject to articles of capitulation.²

The one and only deportation which took place on Île-Saint-Jean was in the fall of 1758 following the capitulation of Louisbourg on 26 July of that year.³ This uprooting has been largely overshadowed by the larger deportation of residents of Acadia in 1755. There are several reasons for this. The deportation from Acadia occurred before the one from Île-Saint-Jean and involved roughly twice as many deportees. Most Acadians now residing in the Maritimes are descended from those who in 1755 were living in Acadia and who managed to evade the deportation of that year, or who were deported and subsequently succeeded in returning to Acadia. Finally, Longfellow's romantic poem, *Evangeline*, has popularized the event of 1755 and devotes itself entirely to this deportation.

The earliest deportation of French from what is now the Maritime Provinces occurred in 1745. British naval forces under Commodore Peter Warren and New England soldiers led by Colonel William Pepperrell forced the first capitulation of Louisbourg on 16 June of that year.⁴ British

2. Acadians living in the Chignecto area west of the present Nova Scotia/New Brunswick border represent a special case. Among the first Acadians to be deported in 1755, they were considered British subjects by Britain, but French subjects by France. It might be argued that these Acadians were subject to the articles of capitulation signed on 16 June 1755, following the capture of Fort Beauséjour by the British at a time when Britain and France were not officially at war. However, the only article of capitulation dealing with the local Acadians was one pardoning them for any role they may have played in defending the fort.

3. Having been taken by the British in 1745, Louisbourg was restored to France in 1748 by the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. Louisbourg then remained in French hands until 1758 when the second capitulation occurred, precipitating the deportation of residents of both Île-Royale and Île-Saint-Jean. The fullest account of the deportation of Île-Saint-Jean's Acadians is that of Earle Lockerby, "The Deportation of the Acadians of Île St-Jean, 1758," *Acadiensis*, XXVII, 2 (Spring 1998), pp. 45-94.

4. In 1751 Britain and its colonies abandoned the Julian calendar in favour of the Gregorian calendar which the French had been using for many years. In the 1740s the Gregorian calendar was 11 days ahead of the Julian, e.g., while 16 June, 1745 marks the capitulation of Louisbourg, according to the Julian, or Old Style (O.S.) calendar, this event occurred on 27 June, according to the Gregorian, or New Style (N.S.) calendar. In this paper O.S. dates are used consistently throughout, unless otherwise indicated. In Britain and its colonies the legal year was from 25 March to 24 March when the Julian calendar was still in use. Dates within the 1 January to 24 March period were not always written in a consistent fashion which can lead to confusion for the unwary. For example, 19 January

forces then occupied Louisbourg until it was officially restored to the French on 22 June 1749 by which time French administrators and some civilians had returned to Île-Royale. Immediately following the capitulation most civilians from Louisbourg and other settlements on Île-Royale, as well as the soldiers comprising the garrison at Louisbourg, were shipped off to France.

Since virtually all the soldiers at Louisbourg in 1745 had come from France or were Swiss mercenaries, their dispatch to Europe may be considered a repatriation rather than an exile. While some of Île-Royale's civilians had moved there from Acadia, many, perhaps a majority, had come directly from France and were therefore not Acadians. Acadian or not, most of those who had settled on Île-Royale were promptly sent to France. The residents of Île-Saint-Jean came within a hair of being uprooted and sent abroad as a result of this capitulation.

This paper explores in depth the forces which shaped the destiny of the inhabitants of Île-Saint-Jean during the years that the British were in control of Louisbourg. In particular, it examines the various efforts which Britain made to deport the inhabitants of Île-Saint-Jean following the capture of the fortress of Louisbourg from its French defenders. The New England role, notably that of Massachusetts Governor William Shirley, in matters affecting Île-Saint-Jean during the two years following the capitulation is also explored.

ÎLE-SAINT-JEAN AT THE TIME OF THE CAPITULATION

Organized settlement of Île-Saint-Jean began in 1720 when most of the initial settlers came from France. A few families from Acadia settled on the Island at about this time. Although mass migration from Acadia did not occur until after 1749, during much of the time between 1720 and 1745 there was a small amount of immigration from Acadia to Île-Saint-Jean. According to a census taken in 1739, the last comprehensive one prior to 1751, the population of Île-Saint-Jean was 440 souls, most of whom lived

1746 might be written as such, but might also be written as 19 January 1745, 19 January 1745/46 or 19 January 1745/6. This problem does not arise with dates between 25 March and 31 December. Continuing with the above example, a reference cited in this paper uses the form 19 January 1746, regardless of the form in which the date appears on the document cited.

on the eastern third of the Island and were engaged in farming and fishing.⁵ There was on average about one cow and one sheep per man, woman and child.⁶ In 1745 British officials at Louisbourg reported the population on the Island to be about 1000.⁷ This may have been reasonably accurate, since in 1749 French officials reinstalled at Louisbourg wrote that the population of Île-Saint-Jean at that time was 128 families totaling 735 people.⁸ It is possible that the number of residents who left the Island during the fifteen months or so following the capitulation may have totaled 200 or more.

Most of the commercial fishery was conducted largely off the north shore, the bulk of this activity being concentrated at St. Peters Harbour, known to the French as Havre-Saint-Pierre or Saint-Pierre-du-Nord.⁹ Throughout the French regime on Île-Saint-Jean the administrative center, Port-Lajoie, was eclipsed by Saint-Pierre-du-Nord in both size and stability of population, and in the number of prominent or influential civilian residents. Saint-Pierre-du-Nord was the main commercial center and the majority of the Island's tiny merchant class lived there.

French officials had intended that Île-Saint-Jean would become the "breadbasket" to Louisbourg by supplying agricultural products to the town and to the fortress with its large numbers of soldiers. Île-Saint-Jean never

5. A breakdown of population may be found in J. Henri Blanchard, *The Acadians of Prince Edward Island 1720-1764* (Charlottetown, 1964), p. 31. Blanchard terms this as "census of 1740." Blanchard's numbers contain arithmetical errors and primary sources indicate that this census was in fact conducted prior to 20 October 1739. See Archives nationales de France, Fonds des Colonies (AN/FC), G¹, 466, No. 44, Recensement général de l'Isle S^t Jean en Canada. At another point in his work (p. 33) Blanchard gives the population in 1745 or 1746 as 653 and attributes this number to the authors of a school text. The authors of this text however do not provide any population estimate for this period.

6. In general, in this paper the source of personal statistical information such as this, as well as information concerning the age, spouse, occupation, place of residence, etc. of particular residents of Île-Saint-Jean is, unless otherwise indicated, "Tour of Inspection Made by the Sieur de la Roque, Census 1752," Appendix A, Part 1, pp. 3-172 in *Report Concerning Canadian Archives for the Year 1905*, Vol. II (Ottawa, 1906).

7. Public Record Office, Colonial Office (PRO/CO) 5/900, pp. 221-224v, Shirley to Newcastle, 22 September 1745.

8. AN/FC, C¹¹B, 28, pp. 83-4, Desherbiers to Minister, 5 November 1749. Desherbiers was the governor at Louisbourg.

9. Some who tilled the soil would have also done a bit of fishing. Similarly, practically all fishermen had a cow or two, perhaps a few chickens, and a vegetable garden.

in fact became a breadbasket to Île-Royale, though in some years it was able to ship modest amounts of livestock, grain and vegetables to Louisbourg. Indeed, the inhabitants on Île-Saint-Jean not infrequently had difficulty feeding themselves, experiencing famine as a result of crop failure.

A small military garrison was maintained at Port-Lajoie, close to present-day Charlottetown, from the earliest years of colonization. The garrison commandant also had the responsibility of providing local civil administration, a role that he shared with a resident *subdelegate* of the Québec-based intendant of New France. In 1745 when Louisbourg capitulated, the commandant was 38 year-old Joseph Du Pont Duvivier. Upon learning that Louisbourg had fallen, Duvivier and his 16-man garrison vacated the Island, leaving 16 July on the *St-Jacques* for Québec which they reached on 7 August.¹⁰ Before leaving the Island, however, he had a written message for those he left behind, requesting that they bravely "hold out and they should soon have assistance from Annapolis."¹¹ As events were to prove, this was a wildly optimistic promise.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE CAPITULATION FOR ÎLE-SAINT-JEAN

During the French regime Île-Saint-Jean was a dependency of Louisbourg. One of the terms of the capitulation in 1745 required all residents and garrisoned soldiers of Île-Royale to be shipped to France, a measure which was swiftly implemented. The terms of capitulation applied equally to all dependencies, Île-Saint-Jean being the only inhabited dependency. The British authorities attached lesser priority to applying the terms of the capitulation to Île-Saint-Jean, probably because it was

10. T.A. Crowley and Bernard Pothier, "Joseph DuPont Duvivier," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, IV (Toronto, 1979), p. 783. For Duvivier's departure and arrival dates see AN/FC, C¹'A, 83, pp. 173-81, Hocquart to Minister, 26 August 1745, "Extrait de ce qui s'est passé...", entry for 8 August 1745 (N.S.). With Duvivier were a corporal, 12 soldiers, two cadets and a gunsmith.

11. Almost a year later, Captain William Harman learned of this letter while on a mission to Port-Lajoie. See PRO, Admiralty [Adm] 1/480, pp. 204-5, "William Harman's Account of his Cruize, 15 July 1746." British administrative and military headquarters in Acadia were located at Annapolis Royal. Duvivier, with not a little bravado and wishful thinking, was suggesting, or asserting even, that Annapolis Royal would soon be captured by the French.

of virtually no military importance and its economic importance was exceedingly modest.

The next two years saw several initiatives to remove the Island's residents. Each was aborted, usually because of last minute changes in circumstances or priorities relating to British military operations at Louisbourg. On these occasions the settlers of Île-Saint-Jean were on the verge of being deported, but were repeatedly saved from such a fate by the intervention of chance.

The first initiative occurred less than three weeks after the capitulation. On 5 July Warren ordered Captain Daniel Fones of the Rhode Island sloop, *Tartar*, to proceed to Île-Saint-Jean:

You are hereby required and directed to proceed to the Île St. Jean in Baie Verte in company with Capt. Donahew. There take on board and bring here all the French inhabitants and such of their effects as you can carry, agreeable to the capitulation on the surrender of Louisbourg. You are to treat them with the utmost civility and humanity. In case any of the natives of the place are desirous to stay there, and willing to take the oath of allegiance to his Majesty, you may [so] permit them. Bring with you a hostage and an exact list of the names of such as remain there. You are to bring all the powder, ammunition and warlike stores you shall find there, using the utmost dispatch.¹²

What neither Warren at Louisbourg nor Fones at sea knew at this point was that David Donahew, captain of the *Resolution*, was already dead. The day before the capitulation, the *Tartar*, *Resolution* and another armed vessel had routed a combined Canadian and Indian force from Tatamagouche Harbour.¹³ This force had been on its way to assist in the defense of Louisbourg. While returning to Louisbourg, Donahew landed on the coast

12. Warren to Fones, 5 July 1745, printed in Julian Gwyn, *The Royal Navy and North America: The Warren Papers, 1736-1752* (London, 1973), p. 136. At this time British officials at Louisbourg sometimes used the term "Baie Verte" to refer to the Northumberland Strait area in general, though they also used the name in reference to the bay upon which the present-day communities of Port Elgin and Baie-Verte are situated.

13. Victor H. Palsits, ed., *The Journal of Captain William Pote Jr* ([1896] New York, 1976), pp. 41-5; Frank H. Patterson, *History of Tatamagouche, Nova Scotia* (Halifax, 1917), pp. 13-18. See also Howard M. Chapin, *The Tartar: The Armed Sloop of the Colony of Rhode Island in King George's War* (Providence, 1922), pp. 37-8; and Howard M. Chapin, *Privateering in King George's War 1739-1748* (Providence, 1928), pp. 49-52.

of Cape Breton and was ambushed by the same Indians and Canadians that he had engaged at Tatamagouche. He and 11 of his men lost their lives.¹⁴ On 8 July Fones reached Louisbourg, bringing news of the debacle involving Captain Donahew. Warren's plans for Île-Saint-Jean were put on hold.

The next initiative related more to the garrison at Port-Lajoie, and less to the inhabitants in general, but was equally futile. Pepperrell and Warren issued instructions dated 20 July to "M' DuPong (sic), commanding officer at S' John's:"

Pursuant to the Capitulation made with Mons' Du Chambon for the surrender of Louisbourg & the territories thereunto belonging the 16th June last, whereby we have agreed to transport him, the troops & inhabitants of the s^d island & territories to France. It is therefore our express orders to you to repair forthwith to this harbour [Louisbourg], bringing with you Goutain, the priests, & all the troops under your command, to be transported to France as above.¹⁵

Duvivier had taken his departure from the Island four days prior to Pepperrell and Warren's orders being issued at Louisbourg. News of his departure probably soon found its way to Louisbourg. With the garrison and their priests having abandoned them, the Island's residents were left to fend for themselves. They designated several deputies to travel to Louisbourg to

14. "Diary of Lieut. Dudley Bradstreet," in Samuel A. Green, *Three Military Diaries Kept by Groton Soldiers in Different Wars* (Cambridge, MA, 1901), p. 28. See also Pepperrell to Shirley, 8 July 1745, *Louisbourg Papers*, III, Massachusetts Historical Society, pp. 48-48v.

15. "Orders to M' DuPong, Commanding Officer at S' John's," Pepperrell Papers, *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, Sixth Series, X, 1899, (Pepperrell Papers) p. 69. "M' DuPong" was of course Joseph DuPont Duvivier and "Goutain" was François-Marie Goutin. As the subdelegate of the financial commissary at Louisbourg, Goutin visited outports to enforce fishing regulations, rule on lawsuits and arguments between merchants, partners and inhabitants. He apparently was at Île-Saint-Jean at the time that Louisbourg fell and may have also been unofficially filling in as the subdelegate of the Intendant of New France on Île-Saint-Jean. Robert Potier Dubuisson, who had served in this capacity, died in 1744. Unlike Duvivier, Goutin was transported back to France and after the war, returned to Louisbourg whereupon he was appointed subdelegate of the financial commissary and storekeeper at Port-Lajoie. He died at Île-Saint-Jean in 1752. "Du Chambon" was Louis DuPont Du Chambon, uncle of Joseph Du Pont Duvivier, and commanding officer at Louisbourg at the time of the capitulation. Prior to the spring of 1744 Du Chambon had served as commandant at Port-Lajoie.

present a memorial requesting that the inhabitants be allowed to remain undisturbed on the Island.¹⁶

A REPRIEVE

It was Governor William Shirley, who had chosen William Pepperrell, a Maine native, to lead the ground forces deployed in the Louisbourg expedition. Indeed it was Shirley who masterminded the whole bold initiative. Two months to the day after the capitulation, Shirley arrived at Louisbourg to find deputies from Île-Saint-Jean waiting with an "Instrument of Submission" from the Island's inhabitants, "computed at about 1000 Souls," as well as a petition requesting that the inhabitants be allowed to remain on the Island as neutral French. Warren and Pepperrell had deferred upon giving an answer until Shirley arrived.¹⁷

Shirley subsequently wrote:

...both of them agree with me in Opinion that it will be most adviseable to clear the Island of them, and destroy their Houses, as next to Cape Breton itself it is the most likely place for the Enemy to rendezvous in upon any Occasion, and its Harbour may be made strong; and an Answer was given to the Deputies accordingly, and Orders for fitting up Transports to remove the Inhabitants and their Effects to Boston under a Guard of two armd Vessells, and a Detachment of four hundred Men.¹⁸

16. "Permission for the Inhabitants of S^t Johns to Remain There," Pepperrell Papers, pp. 69-71. Deputies present at Louisbourg at the beginning of October were J.B. Vecor (Jean-Baptiste Veco of Saint-Pierre-du-Nord), Louis Boquit, Michel de Layall (Michel Miguet dit Deloyal of Saint-Pierre-du-Nord), Baptiste Gallan (Baptiste Gallant, possibly of Port-Lajoie), David Despoir and another person identified only as Bernard (possibly Louis Bernard of Saint-Pierre-du-Nord). This may not have been the first deputation. On 16 September Charles Germain, a Jesuit missionary on the lower St. John River, arrived at Québec and reported that the deputies from Île-Saint-Jean, who had gone to Louisbourg to submit to the English, had been sent home without any positive answer. See E.B. O'Callaghan, ed., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York Procured in Holland, England and France*, X, (Albany, 1858), p. 17-18. Further evidence of two separate deputations (or at least two separate memorials) may be found in Pepperrell and Warren's "Letter to the Inhabitants of S^t Johns," 14 May 1745, Pepperrell Papers, p. 97.

17. PRO/CO 5/900, pp. 221-224v, Shirley to Newcastle, 22 September 1745.

18. *Ibid.*

Subsequently, and apparently during the week that followed Shirley's arrival at Louisbourg, word was received that 13 French warships had been seen nearing Nova Scotia. This obviously jeopardized the planned operation at Île-Saint-Jean, for on 24 September a military council at Louisbourg, attended by Shirley, Pepperrell and 14 other officers deliberated upon what should be done regarding the inhabitants of Île-Saint-Jean. Shirley desired the opinion of the others as to whether it would be "prudent and adviseable for his Majesty's service to send a detachment of 300 or 400 of the troops now here (with a number of vessels) to the island of S^t Johns to destroy the settlements there and remove the inhabitants to New England."¹⁹ A three-man committee was established to enquire into the practicableness of such a proceeding, to determine which vessels might be available, and if feasible, make the necessary preparations "with all possible dispatch."

No record of further council discussion of this matter is at hand and there may have been some confusion or political manoeuvering at this time.²⁰ In a letter which was written at Louisbourg, probably on 26 September, Captain Fones stated that

...nevertheless I am hurried away To the Island of St. Johns with 70 Men
of wars men what the Consequence may be God knows. I am to Convoy
a Number of Vessels with Soldiers To demand the Inhabitants of St Johns
To Surrender the Island To the King of great Britain.²¹

It would seem that the *Tartar* did not proceed to Île-Saint-Jean at this time. In any event, on 30 September Pepperrell and Warren granted permission to the inhabitants of Île-Saint-Jean to remain on the Island "in

19. "Minutes of Council Meeting of 24 September 1745," Pepperrell Papers, p. 46.

20. See PRO/CO 5/900, pp. 221-224v, Shirley to Newcastle, 22 September 1745. One statement in this letter seems incongruent, indeed puzzling: Shirley informs the Duke of Newcastle that an indulgence would be granted to the inhabitants of Île-Saint-Jean. This statement was made two days *prior* to the date of the council meeting at which Shirley was the senior participant and at which it was decided to proceed with the deportation with the utmost dispatch, if judged practicable. Possibly, Shirley was in a position to know that the task would be found to be impracticable in the fall of 1745 but for political reasons wished such a conclusion to be reached by others. Alternatively, this discrepancy may be symptomatic of the general confusion concerning a course of action to be taken

21. Daniel Fones to Governor Wanton [of Rhode Island], printed in Howard M. Chapin, *The Tartar: The Armed Sloop*, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-8. The letter is dated 26, 1745. While one author has supposed that the letter was written on 26 July, Chapin shows that it must have been 26 September.

possession of their land & estates until further orders" and on condition that they conduct themselves as loyal British subjects in all respects, excepting only that they not be required to bear arms against the French. Despite this exception, the inhabitants were required to assist the British in other ways in its struggle against France, should they become aware of any hostile actions or intentions by his Majesty's enemies. Yet another requirement was that the inhabitants supply to Louisbourg all the "live stock & other provisions, stores & refreshment that are on s^d island more than are necessary for their own comfortable subsistance for which they shall be paid at a reasonable rate...." To ensure that all the requirements would be met, "...one of the principal inhabitants of the s^d island shall remain here [at Louisbourg] as an hostage...." This permission, or indulgence, was to be in effect for 12 months following the date of capitulation, ie., until 16 June 1746.²²

On 3 October six deputies from Île-Saint-Jean formally acceded to the indulgence and its terms on behalf of themselves and the rest of the Island's inhabitants, confirming that they "...do hereby testify our free will & thankfull acceptance...."²³ The granting of the indulgence was no more than a temporary expedient. The threat to Louisbourg from the French warships receded but the threat to Île-Saint-Jean from British ships remained. In late September Shirley wrote to the Duke of Newcastle, the colonial secretary in London:

...we have been obliged to deferr sending to S^t John's till it is now too late to remove the French off this year, so that it must be deferred till Spring, when I think it ought to be done without fail.²⁴

Shirley's view was equally shared by Pepperrell and Warren.²⁵

DEPORTATION PLANS REINITIATED

Warren's disappointment at not having succeeded in removing the inhabitants of Île-Saint-Jean during the fall of 1745 was not lessened by

22. "Permission for the Inhabitants of S^t Johns to Remain There," Pepperrell Papers, pp. 69-71.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 71.

24. PRO/CO 5/900, pp. 221-224v, Shirley to Newcastle, 22 September 1745.

25. PRO/CO 5/44, pp. 102-103v, Pepperrell to Newcastle, 4 November 1745; PRO/CO 5/44, pp. 95-97v, Warren to Newcastle, 3 October 1745.

certain intelligence that reached him subsequent to the granting of the indulgence. In early December he wrote the Secretary of the Admiralty as follows:

I just now receiv'd intelligence that I think may be rely'd on, that a Sloop which carry'd the Officer, and Twenty Soldiers, from S^t Johns Island to Canada, soon after the reduction of this place, is return'd again to that Island, and that a Scheme is on foot at Canada, to send Six thousand French, and Indians, to surprize the Garrison, this winter, what the consequence of this may be, time must show, but we shall be upon our Guard, and I have sent a Sloop round this Island [Île Royale] to procure Intelligence.

A great Inducement to me to believe this Intelligence is, that one of the Chief Inhabitants of S^t Johns, who we keep here as an Hostage, for the neutrality, and good behaviour of the rest, as we cou'd not transport them to France this fall, did upon my asking him whether they had any news lately from Canada, tell me no Vessel had arriv'd from thence to S^t Johns this year, but upon my taxing him closely with this falsehood, he acknowledg'd the arrival of the said Sloop, and that the General of Canada had approv'd of their entering into a neutrality with us, no doubt in hopes to give him an opportunity to make use of those people, when a proper occasion shall offer. This shows us what little confidence should be put on those people.²⁶

Though greatly overblown with respect to numbers of troops, and not entirely accurate in other respects, this rumour contained some grains of truth, as will be seen later. Also, it demonstrates some British officials' distrust of the neutrality of their Acadian subjects, a perception which applied equally to Acadians in Cape Breton and Acadia, and one which played a role in the decision to implement the deportation in Acadia in 1755. The *St-Jacques* was indeed sent back to Île-Saint-Jean in the fall of 1745, but its purpose was simply to deliver a load of foodstuffs to alleviate the food shortage there.²⁷

The need to remove the inhabitants of Île-Saint-Jean very much remained on the minds of Warren and Pepperrell at Louisbourg throughout

26. PRO/Adm 1/480, Warren to Thomas Corbett, 23 November 1745, pp. 19-23.

27. Concerning the return of the *St-Jacques* to Île-Saint-Jean, see AN/FC, C¹¹A, 83, pp. 335, "Etat des vivres envoyés à L'Isle Royale et à L'Isle S^t Jean....", enclosed with AN/FC, C¹¹A, 83, pp. 328-31, Hocquart to Minister, 29 October 1745.

the winter months, prompting them to advise Shirley, who had returned to Boston in December:

If we should not be disturb'd by y^e French in the spring we presume the 1st thing proper to undertake will be y^e getting the French from y^e isl^d of S^t Johns, if they don't prevent us by going to Canada, and transporting them and those that remain on this island [Cape Breton] to France, agreeable to the capitulation, for we are of [the] opinion none of them are to be trusted. In order to perform this service we shall want several small vessels, some of them armd, and we believe Cap^t Tyng's ship will be very necessary....²⁸

Shirley did not favour wholesale deportation of Acadians in Acadia, but did seek to have expelled those who actively sided with the French and fomented trouble - such individuals he termed "the most obnoxious and Dangerous to his Majesty's Government."²⁹ Shirley did however unequivocally favour the removal of all of Île-Saint-Jean's inhabitants. In March he wrote Pepperrell:

I am intirely of your Opinion with regard to the transporting of the French from St John's Island the ensuing Spring and shall endeavour to furnish you with small Vessells for that Purpose and Tyng shall assist in that....³⁰

28. Warren and Pepperrell to Shirley, 28 January 1746, Pepperrell Papers, pp. 442-5. Edward Tyng commanded the 20-gun provincial frigate *Massachusetts* which had seen action at Louisbourg in 1745.

29. Shirley to Newcastle, 15 August 1746, printed in Charles Henry Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, I, (New York, 1912), pp. 336-7. Shirley's approach to solving the "Acadian problem" contrasted to that of Warren. The latter was a consistent and strong advocate of "extirpating the French" from all of North America. See Warren to Knowles, 2 June 1746, printed in Gwyn, *The Royal Navy*, p. 255. Regarding the Acadians of Acadia, specifically, see Warren to Corbett, 18 June 1745; Warren to Corbett, 4 July 1745; and Warren to Newcastle, 3 October 1745; all in Gwyn, *Royal Navy*, pp. 122, 133 and 175, respectively. Charles Knowles, Warren's successor as governor at Louisbourg, expressed himself less frequently, vehemently and resolutely on the subject than Warren. Following Acadian involvement with the activities of Ramezay and the Duc d'Anville's initiative in 1746, Shirley reported that it was Knowles' opinion "that the French Inhabitants shou'd be drove out of Nova Scotia early next Spring, and that he wou'd come to Boston as soon as possible, to Concert measures with me for that purpose." See Shirley to Mascarene, 19 December 1746, printed in Lincoln, *Correspondence*, I, pp. 370-2.

30. Shirley to Pepperrell, 1 March 1746, printed in Lincoln, *Correspondence*, I, pp. 310-1.

As winter gave way to spring, Warren and Pepperrell were mindful of the impending expiration on 16 June of the indulgence granted the previous fall. The first concrete steps to deal with unfinished business were taken on 29 April when at a council of war held at Louisbourg it was "Advised, that two or three vessels be sent as soon as possible to S^t Johns, to order the inhabitants to hold themselves in a readiness to evacuate the s^d island, agreeable to y^e terms of the capitulation, and to bring away as many of the chief of them as they can."³¹ This expression of intent was not promptly translated into instructions because not a sufficient number of naval ships had yet arrived for the season at Louisbourg - reinforcements were daily expected from Britain, New England and a British naval base in Antigua. With many of these vessels having their own tasks to pursue unrelated to Île-Saint-Jean, Warren and Pepperrell welcomed Shirley's offer. About a week after the council of war they wrote Shirley that:

We are ...going to send two armd vessels to the island of St. Johns to bring some of the deputies of that island here, and to settle measures with the inhabitants for their evacuating it...with which if they comply we hope when these vessels return those you intend for us from Boston will be here ready to go for them and their effects, or upon a concompliance [noncompliance?], to act in an hostile manner, and if possible to force them into it and destroy their houses and settlements.³²

On 9 May the *Kinsale* arrived from Antigua at the head of a convoy of three men-of-war and two ordnance ships. Aboard the *Kinsale* was Rear-Admiral Isaac Townsend who immediately upon arriving at Louisbourg assumed the position of commander of naval forces there.³³ The next day a council meeting provided a further elaboration of the plan.

Advis'd that the two vessels lately advis'd to be sent to S^t Johns to summon the inhabitants and to hold them in a readiness to evacuate it, agreeable to the capitulation, and to bring off as many of y^e chief of them as they could, be sent accordingly, as soon as possible, and that a number of other vessels sufficient to bring off all the inhabitants be got ready to

31. "Minutes of a Council Meeting of 29 April 1746," Pepperrell Papers, p. 61.

32. Pepperrell and Warren to Shirley, 6 May 1746, printed in Lincoln, *Correspondence*, I, pp. 317-8.

33. At Louisbourg Warren held two different positions simultaneously. He was both governor and commander of naval forces at that post. He was succeeded by Townsend as commander of naval forces, and at the beginning of June was succeeded by Charles Knowles as governor.

follow them, and that it be recommended to the Hon^{ble} Admiral Townsend to send a ship of force to convoy them, and that all the American troops here that are fit for duty, and that are not inlisted in the new regiments, be sent in the aforesaid vessels to destroy the settlements on said island, and from thence to return home to New England.³⁴

Four days later, Warren, Pepperrell and Townsend issued orders to Captain William Harman of the *Kinsale*, Captain Stephen Colby of the *Albany* and Colonel John Choate to proceed to Port-Lajoie. According to their instructions they were to inform the inhabitants that they were to be transported, along with their personal effects, to France. They were also instructed to take and retain hostages to ensure "sufficient Security of their due performance of the Capitulation...."³⁵ A second purpose of the mission to Île-Saint-Jean was to assess the situation in order for officials at Louisbourg to better determine how to proceed - in particular to know how many transports should be sent to the Island. Captain Harman was provided with the best pilot at Louisbourg, Baptiste Deon, who was highly regarded by Louisbourg officials for his skill and knowledge in navigating waters around Nova Scotia and the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Warren promised Deon £100 if he could prevail upon the inhabitants of Île-Saint-Jean to comply with the capitulation.³⁶

Upon arrival at Port-Lajoie, Capt. Harman was to dispatch Baptiste Deon with several others in an Indian canoe, which was provided for the purpose, to make contact with the inhabitants. Deon would show them a letter from Capt. Harman, requesting that they come aboard the *Kinsale*. According to the plan, once on board the *Kinsale*, the inhabitants would be shown a letter addressed to them and signed "Your friends, P. Warren and W^m Pepperrell." Should the officers find that the inhabitants had deserted the Island, they were to "Endeavour without exposing your Men too much to the hazard of an Ambush to burn and destroy as many of their Houses,

34. "Minutes of a Council Meeting of 10 May 1746," Pepperrell Papers, p. 64.

35. PRO/Adm 1/480, pp. 81-2, Townsend, Warren and Pepperrell to Harman, Choates (sic) and Colby, 14 May 1746.

36. PRO/CO 5/44, pp. 33-7, Warren to Knowles, 2 June 1745. Deon, sometimes referred to as "de Young," was prevailed upon by Warren to remain at Louisbourg during the time that it was occupied by the British. He was also permitted to continue living on Cape Breton after the second capitulation in 1758.

Vessels, and Settlements as you possibly can, using your utmost Diligence and dispatch in the Execution of this Service....”³⁷

About this time Shirley was also taking concrete steps to make his contribution. On 15 May the Council of the Province of Massachusetts Bay discussed a proposal for assisting in the removal of the inhabitants of Île-Saint-Jean. As a result, instructions were given that the provincial brigantine, the 12-gun *Boston Packer*, be fitted out and deployed in transporting the inhabitants to France.³⁸

On 18 May the *Kinsale*, mounting 44 guns, left Louisbourg in convoy with the 26-gun *Albany* and a third vessel, the 24-gun *Grayhound*. After four days at sea and a passage through the Strait of Canso, the vessels arrived in the harbour at Port-Lajoie.³⁹ On 23 May Captain Harman “sent two frenchm” & one of our mates Who spoke french up the River in a Canoe to tell some of the Chiefs to Come on B^d us & to deliver a Lett’ from the Govern’ of Louisbourg to them.”⁴⁰

The letter which Harman, Colby and Choate delivered on behalf of their superiors at Louisbourg stated that the status of the inhabitants as neutrals was incompatible with the terms of the capitulation and therefore they and their effects would be transferred to France on vessels sent for this purpose. The inhabitants were warned of the ill consequences of attempting to evade

37. PRO/Adm 1/480, pp. 81-2, Townsend, Warren and Pepperrell to Harman, Choates (sic) and Colby, 14 May 1746. Regarding the intent to burn settlements, see also PRO/CO 5/44, pp. 31-32v, Warren to Townsend, 16 May 1746. Despite the intent which clearly existed at this time, buildings on Île-Saint-Jean were not burned by British or New England soldiers at any time during the French regime, with the exception of some depredation in the spring of 1745 by a couple of New England privateers. The resultant burning of buildings is believed to have been limited to some buildings (mostly garrison structures) at Port-Lajoie and the buildings of one settler, Jean-Pierre Roma. Florid images of wanton, wholesale burning of most of the houses, barns, churches and livestock on Île-Saint-Jean at the time of the deportation in 1758 have been painted by Blanchard and Casgrain. For discussion of this, see Lockerby, “The Deportation of the Acadians from Ile St.-Jean, 1758,” *Acadiensis*, XVII, 2, pp. 45-94.

38. For the wording of the Council’s resolution see PRO/CO 5/810, “Minutes of a Council Meeting on 12 May 1746.”

39. PRO/Adm 1/501, “Journal of the Kinsale,” entries for 18 May and 22 May.

40. “Journal of the Kinsale,” entry for 23 May. The “River” referred to was what is now known as the Hillsborough River. At that time it was called Rivière-du-Nord-Est by the French.

the provisions of the capitulation and were instructed to repair to the vessels “with all possible Dispatch” where they would be “persuaded all possible care and tenderness shall be had” of them.⁴¹

After four days of communicating their message to the inhabitants and collecting what intelligence they could, the officers apparently felt they were in a position to advise their superiors at Louisbourg. Two of the inhabitants chosen to act as deputies, were placed aboard the *Grayhound* which was then ready to proceed to Louisbourg on 27 May.⁴² Contrary winds delayed the vessel’s leaving Port-Lajoie by one day, but by 2 June the *Grayhound* had made Louisbourg. Warren reported that “...one of the Sloops that was sent thither [to St. John’s Island] is just arriv’d here, with two of the French Deputys of that Island who inform us that they are ready to comply with the Capitulation, but hope that we will pay them for their Cattle, which I believe will be agreed to, and Vessells sent immediately to Transport them....”⁴³ This positive news brought by the *Grayhound* apparently gave Warren the idea that the *Kinsale* and *Albany* would be together able to embark all of the inhabitants.⁴⁴

The deputies attempted to stave off the deportation. They represented to the new governor, Commodore Charles Knowles, that the inhabitants of Île-Saint-Jean had behaved well toward the British and had honoured the terms of the indulgence. They pleaded that they and their fellow residents

41. PRO/Adm 1/480, pp. 136-136v, “Letter to the Inhabitants of S^t Johns,” 14 May 1746. In the letter the inhabitants were informed that M^r Duboy (probably Joseph Dubois of Saint-Pierre-du-Nord) had died at Louisbourg during the previous winter and that his personal effects would be distributed to his proper heirs. Presumably this individual was the hostage sent to Louisbourg in accordance with the terms of the indulgence.

42. “Journal of the *Kinsale*,” entry for 27 May. The two deputies were Jean Cheney and Louis Closquene (sic). See PRO/CO 5/44, pp. 126-7, “Articles of Indulgence,” 9 June 1746. Cheney (or Chenet) was from Saint-Pierre-du-Nord and Louis Closquinet resided at Rivière-de-Peuguit, now Pisiquid River.

43. PRO/Adm 1/480, pp. 46-46v, Warren to Corbett, 2 June 1746.

44. Warren wrote: “The *Kinsale* and *Albany* brig [are] to evacuate Île St. Jean of all the French, who are about 1000 souls....” See Warren to Newcastle, 2 June 1746, printed in Gwyn, *The Royal Navy*, p. 264. While at Port-Lajoie, however, Captains Harman and Colby made little or no effort to do anything other than to prepare the inhabitants for subsequent boarding of other vessels.

"may be indulg'd with a further time to gather in their Harvest, or during his Britannick Majesty's pleasure."⁴⁵

Following the departure of the *Grayhound* from Port-Lajoie, the crews of the *Kinsale* and *Albany* spent the next two weeks wooding and watering these two vessels, sounding the harbour and using the ships' boats to send armed men to continue giving instructions to the inhabitants concerning their removal. This included sending word to the settlement of Saint-Pierre-du-Nord to get ready to embark.⁴⁶ From the entries in the *Kinsale*'s journal it appears that efforts to have the inhabitants prepare for boarding the British vessels were not very effective - many went into hiding in the woods. On 11 June Captain Harman ordered Captain Colby to get the *Albany* ready to return to Louisbourg. She left the following day and entered Louisbourg harbour after four days at sea.⁴⁷

Some of the inhabitants, alarmed at developments, did more than hide in the woods. Some fled the Island, a few to Québec but most to Acadia. François Douville, one of the first settlers to establish himself on Île-Saint-Jean and the captain of a vessel he owned, took leave of his home at Saint-Pierre-du-Nord on 19 May, arriving at Québec with his family on 28 May. With him was Jean-Pierre Roma and his family.⁴⁸ Roma had settled on Île-Saint-Jean in 1732 at Trois-Rivières, now Brudenell Point, where he established a business based on agriculture, the fishery and general trading. His establishment was burned in the late spring of 1745 by New England privateers detached from the forces attacking Louisbourg. Roma and his family had fled to Saint-Pierre-du-Nord where Roma had business interests and where they apparently resided for almost a year.

Another resident who chose to flee the Island was Michel Miguet dit Loyal, a member of the six-man deputation which had acceded to the indulgence granted in the fall of 1745. He left Saint-Pierre-du-Nord for

45. PRO/CO 5/44, pp. 126-7, "Articles of Indulgence," 9 June 1746.

46. "Journal of the Kinsale," entry for 27 May.

47. PRO/Adm 51/644, "Journal of the Norwich," entry for 16 June. The *Norwich* was at that time in Louisbourg harbour. Its journal, like those of other vessels moored in the harbour, provides insight into the comings and goings of various vessels.

48. O'Callaghan, *Documents*, X, p. 47. It may be noted that in most instances in this paper in which O'Callaghan is cited, similar information could be cited in *Collection de Manuscrits Contenant Lettres, Mémoires et Autres Documents Historiques Relatifs à la Nouvelle-France*, III (Québec, 1884), specifically from pp. 272-313, 326-69, and 400-119.

Québec with his family on 1 June 1746. On 29 August some British prisoners of the French were being marched through the Chignecto area where they encountered "50 men, women and Children upon horses and Mules who had been routed from the Island St. John's by Admiral Warren; they came to our Tents and Cursed us on account of the aforesaid Brave Admiral who had drove them out of house and home."⁴⁹

While some residents saw fit to flee, there were occasionally those who had reason to make their way to Île-Saint-Jean. One such was Sieur De la Borde who happened to be in France at the time of the capitulation and who had a wife, two children and four Negro slaves living on the Island. He apparently was well connected in Paris and sought to have an application made on his behalf to the British ambassador for a passport to enable him to rejoin his family in Île-Saint-Jean, or preferably for them to join him in France.⁵⁰ Sieur De la Borde probably chose to make the trip himself. In any event he and his family were living at Saint-Pierre-du-Nord in 1752.⁵¹ Most of the inhabitants chose to remain on their small holdings, planting, harvesting and fearing that each harvest would be the last.

After the *Albany* had departed Port-Lajoie the men of the *Kinsale* did not have a great deal of contact with the inhabitants while awaiting the arrival of transports and/or further instructions. They spent their time wooding and watering the vessels, doing maintenance work and dragging the harbour for, and retrieving, a cable which the *Albany* had lost.⁵² There

49. "The Journal of a Captive, 1745-1748," in Isabel M. Calder, *Colonial Captivities, Marches and Journeys* (New York, 1935), p. 23. The keeper of the journal had been captured at sea by a French warship and was taken from Acadia to Québec where he was imprisoned. The encounter with the fugitives from Île-Saint-Jean took place as the latter were making their way from Baie-Verte to Beaubassin.

50. PRO/State Papers, 78/230, application enclosed with letter of Mr. Van Hoey, 28 March 1746.

51. Among the residents of Saint-Pierre-du-Nord in 1752 was a Mr. Delabord (sic), a native of Coulombe, archbishopric of Paris, who was then 48 years of age and had been residing on the Island for 11 years. He was a merchant and owned a vessel. His wife was a native of Île-Saint-Jean. See De la Roque, Census 1752, p. 134. According to the register for the parish of Saint-Pierre-du-Nord, there was an adult baptism of a *négresse* of De la Borde there on 31 October 1747. See the register for the Parish of Saint-Pierre-du-Nord 1724-1758, National Archives of Canada, MG 6, B4, 1, Série GG, Cultes, No. 255-257 (Microfilm numbers: original, F-817; transcript, C-2970).

52. "Journal of the Kinsale," entries for 13 to 18 June.

is no record of efforts to mobilize transports or of further instructions being given upon the *Grayhound*'s return to Louisbourg. Perhaps Louisbourg officials were awaiting the arrival of the *Boston Packet* and *Massachusetts* from Boston. Perhaps there was some delay occasioned by the transfer of duties of governor of Louisbourg from Warren to Knowles, a career navy man. The latter had arrived at Louisbourg from England on 22 May and the transfer of responsibilities occurred on 2 June.⁵³ Warren took up new duties in Boston. There is no evidence that at this point in time the authorities had any intention of paying heed to the two deputies' entreaties.

DEPORTATION AVERTED

Any hiatus which may have been occasioned by the transition of governors, or by waiting for Shirley's promised vessels, was soon overtaken by other events which had been set in train months previously in London.⁵⁴ On 6 June an express arrived at Louisbourg carrying a letter from Newcastle, advising of an expedition to be undertaken by British forces against Québec, and issuing instructions regarding the provision of support from Louisbourg.⁵⁵ Several councils of war were held immediately to deal with Newcastle's instructions. One outcome of these deliberations was an unanimous decision to abandon the operation at Île-Saint-Jean either "till his Majesty's further pleasure shall be known or till the Intended Expedition be over...."⁵⁶ This decision, rendered essential by the need to redeploy transport vessels, was facilitated by a rationalization that the deputies had made a credible plea, that the inhabitants of Île-Saint-Jean had "Strictly comply'd with all the articles and Restraints that they were lay'd under and have behav'd in an Inoffensive manner," and that the evacuation of the inhabitants would be costly.⁵⁷ Knowles estimated that an expense of £6,000

53. See PRO/CO 5/44, pp. 33-7, Warren to Knowles, 2 June 1746.

54. The *Massachusetts*, was not sent to Louisbourg in 1746 and there is no evidence that the *Boston Packet* was either.

55. See Warren to Newcastle, 6 June 1746, printed in Gwyn, *Royal Navy*, pp. 269-71. Newcastle's instructions were dated 7 and 9 April. In early 1746 Lieutenant-General James Sinclair was appointed to command a force of 6000 men intended to take Québec. See "James Sinclair," *Dictionary of National Biography*, 18 (London, 1909), p. 298.

56. PRO/CO 5/44, pp. 124-124v, "At a Council of war held at Louisbourg," 7 June 1746.

57. *Ibid.*

to £8,000 would have been incurred. He noted also that “as they are poor Miserable inoffensive People, and I have Hostages in my Possession, there is no Danger to be apprehended from them....”⁵⁸

Pursuant to a council of war held on 7 June, a new indulgence was drawn up whereby the inhabitants of Île-Saint-Jean would be permitted to reside there “till his Majesty’s further pleasure shall be known....”⁵⁹ The new indulgence provided for the retention of a deputy and hostages at Louisbourg, and required the inhabitants to subject themselves to the same articles as had been stipulated in the indulgence signed by Island deputies and the Louisbourg authorities the previous fall. One such article required that the inhabitants “use their best endeavours to bring the Indians now in the interest of the French to behave in a peacable & frindly manner towards the English....”⁶⁰ It contained one significantly new feature, namely, “that they [inhabitants of Île-Saint-Jean] send ...as soon as possible one half of the Live Stock they now have upon the said Island for which they shall be paid a Reasonable Value.” What was new was that *half* the livestock was to be shipped to Louisbourg, whereas in the earlier indulgence it was merely livestock *surplus* to the inhabitants’ needs. The wording of the new indulgence indicates that its terms had been discussed with the two deputies and that they had been in agreement.

Perhaps in anticipation of the need for meat for the British forces expected to be coming to take Québec, Townsend took immediate steps to procure livestock from Île-Saint-Jean. On 8 June he instructed John Rous, commander of the warship, *Shirley*, to sail in convoy with the transport, *Ruby*, to Port-Lajoie.⁶¹ Rous was given instructions for Captain Harman who was to leave Port-Lajoie and take up patrol at the mouth of the St. Lawrence River. The *Ruby* carried 60 soldiers under Captain Hugh Scott. Townsend ordered Rous, with the support of Scott and his men, to “enforce

58. PRO/CO 5/44, pp. 116-118v, Knowles to Newcastle, 8 July 1746. Knowles’ assessment of the inhabitants of Île-Saint-Jean is further indicated by his comment that “the poor Wretches [are] capable of doing [neither] harm [n]or good.” See PRO/CO 5/44, pp. 136-41, Knowles to Newcastle, 9 July 1746.

59. PRO/CO 5/44, pp. 126-7, “Articles of Indulgence,” 9 June 1746.

60. “Permission for the Inhabitants of S^t Johns to Remain There,” Pepperrell Papers, pp. 69-71.

61. PRO/Adm 1/480, pp. 152-3, “Townsend’s Instructions to Captain John Rous,” 8 June 1746.

the terms adjusted and settled by us and the said inhabitants." Rous was to use force if he found that the inhabitants "should demur, and not agree to the terms of the two Chiefs they have sent to us, and should proceed so far as to collect in a Body, to offer Violence to you...." Further, if he felt that Captain Scott's troops were inadequate to deal with any situation which might develop, Rous was to send Townsend an "immediate Account of the Same, that I may with all convenient Dispatch send you sufficient Force to compel them to the Treaty of Capitulation & Terms before mention'd."⁶²

The *Shirley*, *Ruby* and an unidentified schooner left for Port-Lajoie on 11 June, arriving there a week later. Before leaving Port-Lajoie, Captain Harman informed Captain Rous "that y^e major p^t of the Inhabitants had Left their Houses & taken to the Woods, & Carried all their Goods & Cattle away & they had sent for a Body of Indians to Come on y^f Island, he was Inform'd it by a French woman who told him to take Care of his people."⁶³ The rumour of an Indian attack was prophetic. Events soon after would bear on relations between Louisbourg and Île-Saint-Jean's inhabitants - relations which of course were crucial to the delicate circumstances in which the Islanders found themselves. These events would represent one small strand of a much broader web of French-British struggle for supremacy in eastern North America.

THE CANADIANS COMPLICATE MATTERS

Just as Britain was planning to capture Québec, so was France planning a major initiative of its own. The recent loss of Île-Royale and Île-Saint-Jean, as well as the loss of Acadia and Plaisance, Newfoundland, more than three decades earlier, rankled authorities in France. During the fall of 1745 and winter of 1746 both Québec and Paris were jointly making preparations. A massive contingent of soldiers and a large naval squadron would be sent from France, and soldiers and Indians from Québec, to retake Louisbourg and its dependencies, as well as Annapolis Royal, virtually the only military base in Acadia. The Duc D'Anville, a cousin of King Louis XV, was put in charge of a fleet of warships, transports, merchantmen

62. *Ibid.*

63. PRO/Adm 51/4341, "Journal of the Shirley," entry for 22 June 1746.

and other vessels which totaled more than 60, and which carried almost 11,000 men.⁶⁴

To assist the Duc d'Anville's mission, in the late spring of 1746 Québec sent a detachment to Acadia consisting of 680 Canadian militia, 80 Micmacs who had wintered near Québec, and about 300 Abenaki warriors, all under the command of Jean-Baptiste-Nicolas-Roch de Ramezay.⁶⁵ On 5 June, having reached Cap-des-Rosiers at the tip of the Gaspé peninsula, Ramezay learned that a resident of Île-Saint-Jean, one Michel Miguet dit Deloyal, had arrived with his family at Cap-des-Rosiers that day from the Island and reported that three English warships had anchored at Port-Lajoie on 22 May.⁶⁶ These were of course the *Kinsale*, *Albany* and *Grayhound*. Ramezay and his men saw an opportunity to *frapper les Anglais*, requiring only a small side trip for a portion of them as they proceeded toward a linking up with the Duc d'Anville's forces. Ramezay sent a scouting party to Baie-Verte or Beaubassin to confirm the truth of this report.⁶⁷ The reconnaissance detail returned to Gaspé on 19 June, reporting that two warships were said to be at Port-Lajoie.⁶⁸

By 29 June Ramezay and most of his ships had managed to reach Baie-Verte at which time a reconnaissance party was dispatched to Île-Saint-Jean. The next day it returned, reporting having seen three 40-gun warships at Port-Lajoie.⁶⁹ By this time these would have been the *Kinsale*, *Shirley* and *Ruby* though the report was somewhat exaggerated: the *Kinsale* carried 44 guns, the *Shirley* 24 and the *Ruby* 12 or less. This news caused great

64. James Pritchard, *Anatomy of a Naval Disaster* (Montreal & Kingston, 1995), pp. 131-3.

65. O'Callaghan, *Documents*, X, pp. 44-6.

66. *Ibid.*, p. 49. See also Daniel-Hyacinthe-Marie Liénard de Beaujeu, "Journal de la campagne du détachement de Canada à l'Acadie et aux Mines, en 1746-47," Collection de documents inédits sur le Canada et l'Amérique, documents sur Acadie, *Le Canada Français*, II (Québec, 1889), pp. 18-19. The manuscript journal may be found in AN/FC, C¹A, 87, pp. 314-61.

67. Beaubassin was an Acadian village overlooking Cumberland Basin and located near what is the site of Fort Lawrence, about a kilometer east of the Nova Scotia-New Brunswick boundary.

68. Beaujeu, "Journal," p. 20; O'Callaghan, *Documents*, X, p. 51. By this time the *Grayhound* had already left Port-Lajoie.

69. The *Kinsale* had problems getting out of the harbour of Port-Lajoie and succeeded in leaving only on 1 July. See "Journal of the *Kinsale*," entries for 18 June to 1 July.

excitement in Ramezay's camp, where supplies were being unloaded, as his men "déchargeoit de son mieux pour être prest au premier événement."⁷⁰ They were no doubt emboldened by further information provided on 1 July by three men from Île-Saint-Jean who had just arrived at Baie-Verte. The latter stated that one of the three vessels [the *Kinsale*] had left Port-Lajoie. Its departure was seen as reducing the risk of a French strike against the remaining two vessels and their crews.⁷¹ Meanwhile with the help of French priests, Ramezay was able to recruit additional Micmac.

Despite the keenness of his men to mount a full blown strike, Ramezay was cautious. He dispatched yet another scouting party, including his nephew, Charles Deschamps de Boishébert, and Joseph-Michel Legardeur de Croisille et de Montesson, to reconnoiter Port-Lajoie. This group returned to Baie-Verte on 6 July and confirmed that there were now only two ships there - a very large transport which appeared to have no guns, and a 24-gun warship.⁷² Further, the crews were going back and forth from the ships to the shore and were displaying a calm, untroubled demeanor.⁷³ This was too good an opportunity to be missed. Ramezay's goal was to "faire déguerpir les Anglois et laisser par ce moyen les habitants de l'Isle S' Jean tranquilles."⁷⁴ Finally, on 9 July, a contingent of approximately 200 Micmac warriors led by Montesson set out for Port-Lajoie. Beside Montesson, there was only a handful of Canadians in the group - five or six cadets, including Boishébert, as well as Father Maurice La Corne, missionary to the Miramichi Micmac.⁷⁵

The British soldiers had been making good progress at collecting livestock. In the six-day period beginning 5 July, 34 sheep, eight hogs, 20

70. Beaujeu, "Journal," p. 22.

71. *Ibid.*, p. 22-3.

72. *Ibid.*, p. 24. Beaujeu later reported that the *Ruby* had 8 guns. See *ibid.*, p. 27. When the *Ruby*, a transport of 380 tons, left England for Cape Breton, it carried 12 guns. See PRO/Adm 7/84, "Pass for the Ruby," 15 August 1745. During the raid at Port-Lajoie on 11 July, the *Ruby* is known to have deployed one or more guns. See PRO/Adm 1/480, pp. 210-210v, William Starkey, "Account of the Murther of the English at S' John's," 23 July 1746.

73. Beaujeu, "Journal," p. 24.

74. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

75. *Ibid.*, p. 25. See also an extract from a letter written by Ramezay in O'Callaghan, *Documents*, X, p. 57; and Phyllis LeBlanc, "Charles Deschamps Boishébert et de Raffetot," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, IV, pp. 212-5.

cattle, two bullocks, two bulls and 12 horses were brought in to Port-Lajoie. The cutting and drying of hay was underway to feed the animals.⁷⁶ No problems had been experienced with the inhabitants, but there had been one scare as Indians had been seen lurking in the vicinity on 29 June (a date which coincides with the first of the two reconnaissance missions that Ramezay had sent to the Island). However, the soldiers were taken completely by surprise when about 5 pm on 11 July the ambush was sprung.⁷⁷

During the raid some 40 to 50 people were attacked, 30 of whom were soldiers who were ashore. All were killed or taken prisoner with the exception of a few who escaped by swimming to the vessels in the harbour. According to Beaujeu's journal, close to 40 English were killed or taken prisoner and the death of one Micmac and the wounding of another were acknowledged.⁷⁸ However, at Chebucto (the present Halifax) French officers serving under Ramezay later informed a British sea captain who had been captured off Nova Scotia by a French warship, that 26 had been killed and 46 taken prisoner.⁷⁹ This would seem to be somewhat of an exaggeration, given various other accounts. Montesson, and presumably Father La Corne, had experienced considerable difficulty in controlling the Indians who were blamed by the Canadians for the success of the mission not having been even greater. A dispatch to Québec claimed that the two British vessels could have been taken had Montesson been better able to control the Indians.⁸⁰

From an assortment of information sources it may be determined that the number of people who were killed, died of their wounds soon after, or were taken prisoner, was perhaps not higher than 40 but almost certainly not

76. "Journal of the Shirley," entries for 5 to 10 July 1746.

77. *Ibid.*, entry for 11 July; see also PRO/Adm 1/480, pp. 313-4, "Copy of a Part of Capt^r Rous, of the Shirley's Journ^r Relating to the Murther of the English at S^r John's," enclosed with PRO/Adm 1/480, pp. 307-312v, Townsend to Corbett, 20 September 1746.

78. Beaujeu, "Journal," p. 26; O'Callaghan, *Documents*, X, p. 57.

79. PRO/Adm 1/1603, Stephen Colby to Corbett, 11 September 1746. Colby, who had been to Port-Lajoie with Captain Harman earlier in 1746, was taken as a prisoner to Chebucto and then to Brest, France. He later won his freedom in a prisoner exchange.

80. Beaujeu, "Journal," p. 26-7; O'Callaghan, *Documents*, X, p. 57.

less than 37, of which 34 were British.⁸¹ Some of the British who were captured were taken to Québec where they were imprisoned. Six died while in prison. Some may have been killed by their Indian captors while being conducted to Québec.⁸² When one captured soldier, Robert Downing, arrived at Québec, his Indian captors were reported by French officials as having also brought some scalps.⁸³ Those taken into captivity at Port-Lajoie included three inhabitants of Île-Saint-Jean. Two were hostages being held by the British, and the third, one Pierre Brisson, had been one of two deputies at Louisbourg and had voluntarily acted as a pilot on the *Shirley* during its trip to Port-Lajoie. He is reported to have conducted Captain Rous to the settlers' houses.⁸⁴ The two hostages were probably released within a few days. Brisson, who was suspected "*d'être un fort mauvais françois*," was thoroughly interrogated by Ramezay, then taken to Québec where he faced more questioning before probably being freed.⁸⁵

Ramezay's objective of dislodging the British vessels was successfully achieved. The *Shirley*'s journal makes no reference to further acquisition of livestock. During the several days after the attack the masters and crews of the *Shirley* and *Ruby* and the schooner that had accompanied them made preparations to put to sea and on 16 July they left for Louisbourg.⁸⁶ Having

81. Aside from the Journal of the *Shirley* and the account of Beaujeu, see PRO/Adm 1/480, pp. 210-210v, William Starkey (master of the *Ruby*), "Account of the Murther of the English at St John's," 23 July 1746; Major H. Everard, *History of the Tho' Farrington Regiment Subsequently Designated the 29th (Worcestershire) Foot 1694 to 1891* (Worcester, 1891), pp. 46-7. See also PRO/Adm 1/480, pp. 241v-242v, Townsend to Warren, 4 August 1746 and PRO/Adm 1/480, pp. 307v-308, Townsend to Corbett, 20 September 1746.

82. See "The Journal of a Captive, 1745-1748 in Calder, *Colonial Captivities*, and three other journals of inmates of the prison at Québec, being: Palsits, ed., *The Journal of Captain William Pote Jr*; Nehemiah How, "A Narrative of the Captivity of Nehemiah How in 1745-1747," in Colin G. Calloway, *North Country Captives* (Hanover, NH, 1992); and John Norton, "The Redeemed Captive Being a Narrative of the Taking and Carrying into Captivity the Reverend Mr. John Norton," in Samuel G. Drake, *A Particular History of the Five Years French and Indian War in New England and Parts Adjacent 1744-1749, Sometimes Called Governor Shirley's War* ([1870] Freeport, NY, 1970), pp. 251-295.

83. O'Callaghan, *Documents*, X, p. 66.

84. *Ibid.*, p. 58.

85. Beaujeu, "Journal," p. 27. In 1752 Brisson is listed as a fisherman and native of France, then living with his family at Port Toulouse, now St. Peters, Cape Breton. See De la Roque, *Census 1752*, p. 13.

86. "Journal of the Shirley," entries for 12 to 16 July 1746.

reached Louisbourg 21 July, apparently having little or no livestock aboard their vessels, Captain Rous and Captain William Starkey of the *Ruby* proceeded to brief Townsend and Knowles on the recent events at Port-Lajoie.⁸⁷ At this time there appears to have been no great or urgent desire to retaliate or to teach the perpetrators of the massacre a lesson. The understanding of Captains Rous, Starkey and Scott at this time appears to have been that the ambush was an isolated incident carried out by the Indians, not necessarily directly connected to the traditional enemy, the French.

RENEWED THREAT TO ÎLE-SAINT-JEAN'S RESIDENTS

By 3 August intelligence reached Louisbourg indicating that the incident at Port-Lajoie was masterminded by the French. This cast the skirmish in a somewhat different light. The suspicion of collaboration or connivance on the part of the inhabitants of Île-Saint-Jean was heightened at Louisbourg and elsewhere, principally Boston. Warren seems to have quickly adopted the view that the French were involved. "I am very sorry for the Loss of Men at S^t John's," he wrote Townsend five days later from Boston; "surely those French deserve the severest Treatment."⁸⁸ Less than two weeks after that, he again expressed his regrets to Townsend that so many men had been lost at Port-Lajoie and informed him: "...make no doubt but You will resent as well as You can, the ill behaviour of the French upon that occasion."⁸⁹

By "French" it appears that Warren meant the French inhabitants of Île-Saint-Jean, not French military troops from Canada or France. Perhaps influenced by Warren's views, Louisbourg was spurred into action. Knowles' journal contains the following entry for 11 August: "Resolv'd in a Council of War that I should proceed with Three of His Majesty's Ships, and a Detachment of 500 Men from the Garrison to the Island of S^t Johns

87. PRO/Adm 1/480, pp. 210-210v, William Starkey, "Account of the Murther of the English at S^t John's," 23 July 1746. See also the excerpt from the log of the *Shirley*, PRO/Adm 1/480, pp. 313-4, "Copy of a Part of Capt^r Rous, of the Shirley's Journ^r Relating to the Murther of the English at S^t Johns," enclosed with PRO/Adm 1/480, pp. 307-312v, Townsend to Corbett, 20 September 1746.

88. PRO/Adm 1/480, p. 248v, Warren to Townsend, 8 August 1746.

89. PRO/Adm 1/480, p. 265v, Warren to Townsend, 19 August 1746.

to punish the Inhabitants for the Breach of the Capitulation of the Garrison of Louisbourg, and reduce them to His Majesty's Obedience, accordingly Gave Orders for getting every thing in readiness.”⁹⁰ The following day the journal of Knowles, states that “The People Employ'd in wat[e]ring the Ship [the *Norwich*] & getting ready for Sea.” On 13 August “Came on board [the *Norwich*] from the Garrison 90 Soldiers AM unmoor'd and hove to 1/3 on the Small Bower Gave Capt” Hore of the Canterbury, and Capt” Daniel of the Hampshire Orders to put themselves under my Command.” The journal reveals that the next day the *Norwich* “made Sail in Company with His Majesty' Ships Canterbury, Hampshire 2 Transports 3 Schooners and 2 Sloops, At 10 Tack'd Ship, the Hampshire Saluted me with 13 Guns return'd 11....”

SAVED BY THE WEATHER

From this, Knowles' own account, one must conclude that he meant business with this small but powerful armada which must have represented a very major chunk of the total naval firepower then at Louisbourg. One of the warships carried 60 guns; another carried 50. Once again, however, fate was to intervene in favour of the inhabitants of Île-Saint-Jean. The *Norwich*'s convoy had not managed to clear Louisbourg harbour when thick fog rolled in. Anchors were lowered. Although the fog lifted within a day, winds were such as to make it difficult to get out of the harbour and several days were spent at anchor. On 19 August the *Norwich* got out but not all the other vessels succeeded in doing so. The *Norwich* reentered the harbour. After two more days of waiting, the weather being foggy with little wind, Knowles wrote in his journal, “it being judged by the Council of War too late in the Year to put in Practice the design against S^t Johns Gave Orders for all the Soldiers to be sent ashore again.”⁹¹

Despite Knowles' intended operation against the inhabitants of Île-Saint-Jean, it is not clear whether the Council of War that gave rise to it had anything better to go on than suspicions that some residents of Île-Saint-Jean had been accomplices to what the British referred to as the murders at Port-Lajoie. If the authorities thought at the time that they were acting on

90. PRO/Adm 50/13, “Journal of Charles Knowles,” entry for 11 August 1746.

91. *Ibid.*, entry for 22 August 1746.

more than mere suspicions, then it would seem that subsequently further information must have raised renewed questions or doubts. In a letter dated 18 September Knowles wrote that "whether the Neutral French [inhabitants of Île-Saint-Jean] were concern'd in it I have not yet been able to learn, but if they were I shall make the Hostages Sufferr accordingly...."⁹² Two days later in a letter to the Secretary of the Admiralty, Townsend described the massacre at some length. He referred only to Indians as the perpetrators and made no reference to the Canadians, let alone any peripheral involvement of the inhabitants.

There is one thing however which is abundantly clear: Ramezay's good intentions to assist the inhabitants of Île-Saint-Jean, by striking at the British presence at Port-Lajoie, ironically came perilously close to precipitating a counterproductive action which, had it succeeded, may very well have been calamitous to the very people he wished to help.

THE DEPORTATION THREAT RECEDES

Having survived 1745 and 1746 by "the skin of their teeth," the inhabitants of Île-Saint-Jean no doubt had apprehensions about what 1747 would bring. Though the threat of expulsion or pillage was perhaps abating, it had not yet disappeared - after all, Britain and France were still at war. Shirley and Knowles remained keen on removing the inhabitants of Île-Saint-Jean. In April 1747 they wrote to Newcastle, advocating

That the Island of S' Johns should be thoroughly reduc'd to prevent it being made in time almost as serviceable to the French and as great an Annoyance to the English as Cape Breton was before the Reduction of it; for doing which we shall Endeavour to Concert the most adviseable Scheme, as also for promoting His Majesty's Service in general.⁹³

Fortunately for the inhabitants, nothing came of this recommendation of Shirley and Knowles. This time it may have been simply growing disinterest in Île-Saint-Jean at Louisbourg and London which rescued the Island from calamity, although inadequacy of resources to do the job may

92. PRO/CO 5/44, pp. 142-3, Knowles to Newcastle, 18 September 1746.

93. PRO/CO 5/753, pp. 190-2, Shirley to Newcastle, 28 April 1747.

have again been a factor.⁹⁴ In early 1747 Warren recommended that a detachment of soldiers from Louisbourg be located on Île-Saint-Jean but nothing came of his proposal.⁹⁵ This was the last time that Île-Saint-Jean and its people were under any specific external threat until the next capitulation of Louisbourg.

The war came to an end with the signing of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in the fall of 1748. Preliminaries to the treaty were signed in April of that year. When New France learned of the cessation of hostilities, some of those who had fled the Island felt encouraged to return, even before word of the conclusions of negotiations had crossed the Atlantic. In late summer that year Roland-Michel Barrin de la Galissonnière, the Governor at Québec, dispatched to Île-Saint-Jean several military officers under Captain Benoit and a detachment of 25 soldiers, together with several former inhabitants of the Island who had taken refuge at Québec. Two vessels also carried provisions for the relief of the inhabitants.⁹⁶ The wheel had come full circle since Duvivier had pulled out with his soldiers three years earlier and some inhabitants of the Island subsequently did likewise. One such former resident, François Douville, returned to his home at Saint-Pierre-du-Nord and resumed his position as one of the leading inhabitants of the Island. The family of Michel Deloyal also returned.⁹⁷

INDULGENCES HONOURED?

An intriguing question concerns what, if any, role inhabitants of Île Saint-Jean played in the affair at Port-Lajoie which resulted in the death or capture of some 34 or more British military personnel? Officials at Louisbourg at times took the position that inhabitants of Île-Saint-Jean had alerted mainland Micmacs to the presence of the British ships and soldiers

94. In the spring of 1747 it was decided in London to concentrate British naval power in the ensuing months in the vicinity of France. Only three warships would be sent to Louisbourg. See Cabinet Council, 30 March 1747, printed in Gwyn, *The Royal Navy*, p. 387.

95. Warren to Newcastle, 17 January 1747, printed in Gwyn, *The Royal Navy*, pp. 378-9.

96. PRO/CO 5/44, pp. 303-4, La Galissonnière to Hopson, 27 August 1748. See also O'Callaghan, *Documents*, X, pp. 175-6, 178.

97. De la Roque. Census 1752, pp. 137, 140.

at Port-Lajoie and invited or urged them to strike. At other times British officials seemed ambivalent on the subject.

In the regiment to which the slain or captured soldiers belonged, it remained a tradition for well over a century that the Indians had been sent for by the inhabitants.⁹⁸ It must be acknowledged however that tradition can be quite unreliable as an indicator of historical truth. Despite previously expressed uncertainty, Knowles wrote as late as 9 October 1746 that "...the Inhabitants and Savages of the Island S' Johns cruelly fell upon them [the soldiers]...."⁹⁹ Perhaps the best direct evidence that there may have been some involvement of one or more residents of Île-Saint-Jean in the affair at Port-Lajoie in 1746 is Captain Harman's statement that a resident had told him "the Inhabitants had...sent for a Body of Indians to Come on y^e Island...." and that he should therefore be on his guard while at Port-Lajoie. Did the three men from Île-Saint-Jean who arrived at Baie-Verte on 1 July, and who provided Ramezay with intelligence, invite the raid? It is possible that they did. While Beaujeu mentions some Island residents coming to Ramezay's camp on 26 August, to seek food and ammunition, he gives no inkling of the purpose of the earlier visit of the three men who came to Baie-Verte some days before the raid was launched. In any event, an invitation would hardly be needed by Ramezay - he had certainly been aware of the opportunity.

There are two pieces of evidence which suggest that the inhabitants played no role at all. In October 1746 Captain Hugh Scott, who had commanded the soldiers at Port-Lajoie, met under a flag of truce at Chebucto with Rear-Admiral Jacques-Pierre de Taffanel de la Jonquière who had taken over command of the Duc d'Anville's expedition. Jonquière, who was in close touch with Ramezay and some of his officers, claimed that there had been absolutely no involvement on the part of the residents of Île-Saint-Jean. This was of course second hand information, and it is difficult to give much credence to it, given that Jonquière also claimed that only one British soldier had been killed by the Indians at Port-Lajoie.¹⁰⁰ Perhaps the best argument for non-involvement by Island inhabitants comes

98. Everard, *History of the Tho^r Farrington Regiment*, pp. 46-7.

99. PRO/Adm 1/480, pp. 351-2, "Knowles' Instructions to Captain Hugh Scott," 9 October 1746. See also PRO/CO 5/44, pp. 170-170v, Knowles to the Duc d'Anville, 9 October 1746.

100. PRO/CO 5/44, pp. 182-3, Jonquière to Knowles, 16 October 1746.

from Beaujeu's journal. It provides a continuous and detailed record of events attending Ramezay's progress from Québec to Baie-Verte, then to Beaubassin and onward to Annapolis Royal. Nowhere does Beaujeu mention that anyone from Île-Saint-Jean or anywhere else approached the expedition with the idea of conducting the raid at Port-Lajoie. It is true that it was through a resident of Île-Saint-Jean that Ramezay first learned of British ships and soldiers at Port-Lajoie, but this was a mere coincidence - the result of a chance encounter.

From the available evidence one may conclude that if any of the residents of Île-Saint-Jean played a role in the raid at Port-Lajoie in 1746, it was probably somewhat secondary, and not a decisive one. If the inhabitants of Île-Saint-Jean played only a minor role in the ambush at Port-Lajoie, did they otherwise honour the terms of the indulgences granted them? Did they make trouble for their British masters in other ways?

Of Ramezay's exploits during his expedition to Acadia, which lasted from the spring of 1746 until the summer of 1747, the one for which he is best remembered is a surprise assault on New England soldiers at Grand-Pré on 31 January 1747 where many of the victims were shot to death while asleep in their beds. The death toll on the British side has variously estimated to be 66 to 130, the lower number being the British estimate and the higher, the French. Either way, it was the bloodiest battle ever fought in Acadia.¹⁰¹ Reports of the affair made to Governor Paul Mascarene at Annapolis Royal and Governor Shirley at Boston stated that the assault was perpetrated by Canadians, Indians and inhabitants of Chignecto and Île-Saint-Jean.¹⁰²

Beaujeu, who participated in the strike at Grand-Pré, does not mention in his journal any participants from Île-Saint-Jean, though he does mention Acadians joining the raiding party as it made its way from base camp at Chignecto (Beaubassin), through Baie-Verte, Ramsheg (now Wallace), Tatamagouche, and Cobequid (now Truro) to Grand-Pré. It is quite

101. Archibald MacMechan, *Red Snow on Grand Pré* (Toronto, 1931), p. 48.

102. See "Récit de la bataille des Mines," 2 March 1747, inventoried in *Documents relatifs à l'histoire acadienne, volume 1: Inventaire analytique* (Fredericton, 1988), p. 103, Item No. 51; Public Archives of Nova Scotia (PANS), RG1, Vol. 13, Item No. 39, Capt. Benjamin Goldthwait to Shirley, February 1747; and PANS, RG1, Vol. 13A, Item No. 19, Extract of letter from Mascarene to Shirley, 8 February 1747.

possible, however, that some Acadians living at Beaubassin were among the Canadians and Indians that started out from there and that among them were some Islanders. Significant numbers of settlers from Île-Saint-Jean abandoned the Island in 1746, if not also in 1745, and made their way to Beaubassin.¹⁰³ There was plenty of opportunity for the combatants at Grand-Pré to compare notes and for the British officers to thereby learn who their assailants had been. Incredible as it may seem, after a capitulation was arranged, at the invitation of the French officer in command the French and British officers (at least those still surviving) had dinner together.¹⁰⁴ Clearly these were more chivalrous times than the present!

Mascarene describes those who participated with the Canadians and Indians as "Some of the St. John's Island Inhabitants and other renegades or disaffected Inhabitants."¹⁰⁵ There is no doubt that those who made their way from Île-Saint-Jean to Beaubassin in 1746, with what few possessions they could carry, were "disaffected" and some would be ready to vent their anger and frustrations on British soldiers. Did they break the terms of the indulgence in this instance? Arguably they did, though they did not do so on Île-Saint-Jean soil. As residents of Beaubassin in Acadia, they would be seen by the British officials as British subjects - ones who had committed traitorous acts at Grand-Pré.¹⁰⁶

Those who hid their livestock in the woods of Île-Saint-Jean in the spring of 1746 - quite possibly a majority of the inhabitants - were most likely breaching the terms of the indulgence granted in 1745. However, they may not have trusted the British to strictly abide by the agreement concerning the acquisition of surplus livestock. Moreover, they may have

103. "The Journal of a Captive, 1745-1748," in Calder, *Colonial Captivities*, p. 23. In the spring of 1747 Ramezay was feeding a substantial number of people who had abandoned their settlements at Île-Saint-Jean and come to Beaubassin. See O'Callaghan, *Documents, X*, p. 101.

104. Beaujeu, "Journal," p. 72; MacMechan, *Red Snow*, pp. 44-55.

105. PANS, RG1, Vol. 13A, Item No.19, Extract of letter from Mascarene to Shirley, 8 February 1747.

106. Beaubassin was clearly part of Acadia. About a kilometer to the west of Beaubassin lay the Missaguash River. The land west of the river (now New Brunswick) was considered by the government of France to be French territory, ie., not ceded to Britain under the Treaty of Utrecht. The British government, on the other hand, considered Acadia, under the Treaty to include at least all of what is now New Brunswick and peninsular Nova Scotia.

been anticipating the expiration of the indulgence then still in effect - and no indulgence to replace it - signaling renewed efforts to deport them.

RETROSPECTIVE

The period from the fall of Louisbourg in 1745 to the reassertion of French power in 1749 is one for which very little primary documentation is available regarding life on Île-Saint-Jean. The British documents regarding attempts to remove the inhabitants, or dispensation to remain temporarily, do not provide much insight into how the settlers coped with this difficult period and what other challenges they may have had to face. On the French side there are almost no documents available. Clearly, life must have been exceedingly difficult, given the uncertainties of the "on again, off again" plans for deportation, to say nothing of the threat of massive retaliation by British forces at Louisbourg for perceived breaches of the terms of capitulation. For four years the inhabitants were without a garrison or either a civil or judicial officer. The inhabitants apparently had rather limited contact with Canada during this time. Whatever assistance came from that quarter included the well intended, though badly misguided, military support from Ramezay and his forces which could have been far worse than none at all.

Over the years a picture has emerged of the residents of Île-Saint-Jean being almost totally cut off from spiritual and material succor during the 1745-1748 interregnum. Blanchard and other historians have pointed to the lack of "the ministrations of a priest". Harvey concluded that the inhabitants "were denied spiritual comfort for more than five years."¹⁰⁷ Such references contribute to the image of extreme hardship endured by the inhabitants, a very religiously devout people who depended very much on their priests. The asserted absence of any priest, apparently based on assumption or, possibly tradition, and the notion of absence of external assistance, are misleading and erroneous.

While life was unquestionably not easy, there was some external assistance, and for at least a portion of this period the inhabitants indeed had a priest in their midst. The influence of the priest was used to reinforce a

107. Blanchard, *The Acadians of Prince Edward Island*, p. 33; D.C. Harvey, *The French Régime in Prince Edward Island* (New Haven, 1926), p. 109.

petition the inhabitants addressed to Captain Benoit. Most, if not all, of the signatories were those of people living at Saint-Pierre-du-Nord, including two individuals who had served as deputies at Louisbourg during the early part of the British occupation of Île-Royale. To the bottom of the petition the priest penned these words:

Je Certifie à qu'il appartiendra que depuis que je suis missionnaire dans L'isle St Jean que les Habitants du dit Lieu m'ont déclaré qu'ils n'auroient pas pu faire valoir leurs Habitations Sans Le Secours de Simon billard dit La Valeur en foy de quoy jay Signé.

*De La Valtrie, Prestre*¹⁰⁸

In addition, Father Pierre Maillard is known to have made one visit to the Island during this period and may have made more. During a visit in the fall of 1747 he took the time to attend to one *acte de baptême*. However, rather than devoting himself to "the ministrations of a priest," he apparently had other matters on his mind. According to reports reaching Québec from a French priest in Acadia, Maillard was then "at the Island of St. John; he is trying to get his Indians to go to Ile Royale, where they will have an opportunity of attacking six English houses erected outside the [fortified part of the] town [of Louisbourg]."¹⁰⁹

108. AN/FC, C¹¹C, Vol. 8, pp. 191-2, "Inhabitants' petition to Monsieur Benoit." The document is undated, but from its context can be determined to have been written in September or October 1748. The two signatories who had served as deputies at Louisbourg were Jean Cheney (or Chenet) and Jean Baptiste Veco. Simon Billard dit Valeur was a soldier in Duvivier's troop who apparently deserted from the troop, electing instead to stay on the Island and marry a girl from Saint-Pierre-du-Nord named Marie Joseph Charpentier. He provided valuable blacksmith and gunsmith services to the inhabitants. Father Lavaltrie (François Marganne de Chapt de Lavaltrie), born in 1684, was ordained in 1742 at Québec and served at Cap-St-Ignace, Québec, from January 1746 to September 1747. See Jos.-Arthur Richard, *Histoire de Cap St-Ignace* (La Pocatière, QC, 1970), pp. 111-12. See also Cyprien Tanguay, *Répertoire Général du Clergé Canadien* (Montréal, 1893), p. 118. Father Lavaltrie's missionary work at Île-Saint-Jean would have begun sometime later, and was probably of fairly short tenure (typical of many French missionaries on Île-Saint-Jean). Curiously, the parish registers for neither Saint-Pierre-du-Nord nor Port-Lajoie contain any *actes* signed by him.

109. See the register for the Parish of Saint-Pierre-du-Nord 1724-1758, National Archives of Canada, MG 6, B4, 1, Série GG, Cultes, No. 255-257 (Microfilm numbers: original, F-817; transcript, C-2970). For Maillard's non-ecclesiastical activities, see O'Callaghan, *Documents*, X, p. 149.

As regards an external supply of foodstuffs, shiploads sent from Québec in late 1745 and late 1748 have already been mentioned. On at least three or four occasions while Ramezay and his soldiers were in the Chignecto area - in July and August 1746 and in April 1747 - groups of settlers from Île-Saint-Jean came to Ramezay and returned to the Island with supplies procured from him.¹¹⁰ The instance in April 1747 is particularly revealing. Ramezay wrote that he had "a good deal of rice and peas, with which he had just assisted one hundred families of the Island of St. John, thirty of whom have come to represent their wretchedness to him."¹¹¹ One hundred families must have accounted for close to three quarters of the total population. In August 1746 deputies representing "*tous les habitants [de l'Isle S' Jean]*" received not only food support from Ramezay, but also powder and musket balls "*pour se défendre des Anglois qui viendroient les y inquiétés.*"¹¹²

Whether or not these external supplies were equal to the amounts the inhabitants of Île-Saint-Jean were accustomed to receiving prior to 1745 is a moot point. Certainly, the settlers had experienced wretchedness and food shortages on more than one occasion before 1745 and any such hardship which they experienced from 1745 to 1748 was a harbinger of what was to come during the final decade of the French regime on Île-Saint-Jean. From 1749 to 1758 misery and famine not infrequently prevailed, particularly among those Acadians who had crossed to Île-Saint-Jean after 1749.

As it turned out, two of the major initiatives of Britain and France during the war, each of which either did or could have greatly affected the destiny of the people of Île-Saint-Jean, came to naught. The planned British expedition to Canada in 1746 did not materialize. The mission of the Duc d'Anville, which might have resulted in Île-Saint-Jean being restored to the French in 1746, was an abject failure, meeting a disastrous end due to hurricanes and shipboard epidemics. Consequently, Ramezay's expedition to Acadia contributed nothing towards the achievement of the military objectives of Paris in what are now the Maritime Provinces. To the utter disgust of the New Englanders, in 1748 Île-Royale and Île-Saint-Jean were handed back to France in exchange for Madras on the other side of the world.

110. Beaujeu, "Journal," p. 34; O'Callaghan, *Documents*, X, pp. 58, 101, 106.

111. O'Callaghan, *Documents*, X, p. 106.

112. Beaujeu, "Journal," p. 34.

A few people, however, gained from the French exploit at Port-Lajoie. Ramezay's reputation was undoubtedly enhanced. Montesson was commended in dispatches to the French minister responsible for colonization, Jean Frédéric Phélypeaux, Comte de Maurepas, for having "distinguished himself at Port-Lajoie."¹¹³ Father La Corne's "*zèle pour le bien de la Religion et de L'Estat*" was duly noted in connection with Ramezay's campaigns. Indeed his contribution to the raid at Port-Lajoie was judged at Québec to be sufficiently important to merit a citation in a dispatch to Minister Maurepas. Intendant Gilles Hocquart wrote: "*Nous avons Lieu d'Etre Extremement contents de la conduite que...le P. La Corne Récolet missionnaire a miramichi...s'Est montré a l'affaire du Port Lajoye a la Teste de ses micmacs avec l'intépidité d'un homme de guerre...*".¹¹⁴

Most historians have depicted the 1745-49 period on Île-Saint-Jean in somewhat overly simplistic terms. Blanchard, for example, indicates that there were two instances in which the inhabitants were under threat and that they avoided deportation as a result of deputies' pleas and a shortage of transport vessels.¹¹⁵ In fact, the deputies' entreaties were ineffectual, serving only as one excuse for the British to seize upon when they were forced for other reasons to postpone deportation for other reasons. Portrayals of the period suggest little change in population, ie., stagnation of population growth on account of immigration drying up. In fact the population dropped significantly as a result of settlers fleeing the Island - perhaps by as much as 20%. One action of the inhabitants which has been overlooked is their own defiance - by hiding in the woods with their livestock, they signaled to the British that they would not make deportation easy for those who would deport them.

In reality, the forces which shaped the destiny of the inhabitants of Île-Saint-Jean from 1745 to 1747 were considerably more complex and varied than has previously been acknowledged. Many of the inhabitants probably did not strictly observe the terms of the indulgences granted them, but with a great deal of luck they were able to survive five or so waves of grave threats and move on to the next chapter of their development as a colony under the French flag.

113. AN/FC, C¹¹A, 85, pp. 356v-357, Hocquart to Maurepas, 6 October 1746.

114. *Ibid.*, pp. 357v-358.

115. Blanchard, *The Acadians of Prince Edward*, p. 32.

Le réveil du patriotisme acadien-américain, 1895-1905: la fondation de la Société l'Assomption

Régis BRUN

Cet exposé renvoie à un fonds archivistique où repose une riche documentation inédite comprenant près de 2 500 lettres relatives à la Société l'Assomption, la plus importante des institutions financières acadiennes, et aux principaux événements qui ont marqué les années 1900-1930, époque qui définira l'Acadie contemporaine¹.

Il s'agit en effet des archives de Clarence Cormier (né à Cap-Pelé, N.-B. en 1880 et décédé à Waltham, Mass. en 1964), un des fondateurs de la Société l'Assomption en septembre 1903, alors qu'il n'était âgé que de 23 ans. Il fut un témoin privilégié de l'évolution de cette institution acadienne y ayant occupé tous les postes administratifs tout en ayant été impliqué de près dans l'histoire de l'Acadie d'alors et particulièrement celle des Acadiens-américains. L'objet de ce texte est de démontrer la richesse de ce fonds d'archives par rapport au réveil du patriotisme acadien-américain

1. Voir les fonds d'archives suivants au Centre d'études acadiennes (CEA), Fonds Clarence-Cormier (1902-1964), 304 ; Fonds Société l'Assomption, 97 ; Fonds Succursale Grand-Pré, (Cambridge/Boston), 86-1 ; Fonds Succursale La Tour (Moncton), 87 ; Fonds Antoine-J. Léger, 21 ; Fonds H. P. LeBlanc 24-11-1, L'Assomption, 1902-1952, ms. Voir également les ouvrages suivants : E. Daigle, *Petite histoire d'une grande idée, 1903-1978*, Assomption, Compagnie Mutuelle, Moncton, 1978 ; G. Finn, « Fais quelque chose ! », *Mémoires*, Chez l'auteur, 2000 ; A.-J. Léger, *Les grandes lignes de l'histoire de la Société l'Assomption*, Imprimerie Franciscaine, Québec, 1933 ; C. Savoie, *Mémoire d'un nationaliste acadien*, Éditions d'Acadie, Moncton, 1979 ; C. Quintal, *L'émigrant acadien vers les États-Unis : 1842-1850*, Le Conseil de la Vie française en Amérique, Québec, 1984 ; *Steeple and Smokestacks : The Franco-American Experience in New England*, Institut français, Assumption College, Worcester, 1996 ; Y. Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre, 1776-1930*, Éditions du Septentrion, Sillery, 1990.

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entre 1895 et 1905, qui mena à la fondation de la Société l'Assomption, et par surcroît fit mousser la cause du nationalisme en Acadie².

Les dossiers comprennent entre autres, la correspondance qu'entretint Clarence Cormier avec les personnes suivantes : Pascal Poirier et Pierre-Amand Landry, Messeigneurs Marcel-F. Richard, Albini LeBlanc et Patrice A. Chiasson, les avocats Félix Saint-Cœur et Antoine J. Léger, les médecins David V. Landry, J. Napoléon Bourque et Fred A. Richard, les nationalistes Rémi Benoit, Henri P. LeBlanc, François G. J. Comeau et Calixte Savoie, tous impliqués dans la Société nationale l'Assomption, la Société l'Assomption et *L'Évangélise*. Le milieu éducatif également, est amplement représenté par les lettres de supérieurs ou recteurs et de professeurs des collèges de Saint-Joseph, de Sainte-Anne et du Sacré-Cœur. Le journalisme du temps y figure avec Valentin Landry, Rufin Arsenault, Clément Cormier, Alfred Roy, Ferdinand Robidoux et Marcel Gaudet tous actifs dans les journaux de l'époque, soit *L'Évangélise*, *Le Moniteur Acadien*, *L'Acadien* et *L'Acadie*, où sont commentés les sujets brûlants de l'actualité acadienne.

Les politiciens de tout acabit ont adressé des lettres à Clarence Cormier dont David V. Landry, Alexandre Doucet et Antoine J. Léger, de même que

2. CEA, Fonds Clarence-Cormier, *op. cit.* ; *L'Assomption*, mars 1960, p. 8 ; avril-mai 1960, p. 7 ; mars-avril 1964, p. 1 et 8. U.-J. Bourgeois, « Instituteurs et Écoles au Cap-Pelé », *Société historique acadienne (SHA)*, vol. 1, n° 7, p. 31 ; *Historique de la paroisse Saint-Joseph, Waltham, Mass., 1894-1919*, Waltham, 1919. Clarence Cormier épousa en 1901 à Waltham, Anne-Marie Léger, fille de Théophile et Aglaé Geoffrion. Les Geoffrion, originaires de Wotton au Québec, étaient une famille à l'aise de Waltham, où ils ont été parmi les pionniers de la création de la paroisse française de Saint-Joseph, et où plus tard, Clarence Cormier joua un rôle considérable. Théophile Léger, originaire de Wotton, mais natif de Memramcook, accompagna son père Placide et son grand-père Israël, au Québec en 1848. Par cette alliance, Clarence Cormier devenait le cousin de Dominique S. Léger, le premier chancelier-général de la Société. CEA, Fichier Loiselle, famille Léger. U. J. Bourgeois, « La paroisse de Cap-Pelé : Distribution et location des familles vers 1877 », *Sur l'empremier, Société historique de la mer Rouge (SHMR)*, vol. 3, n° 4, 1994, p. 50 ; Y. Léger, « La Montée de quelques Acadiens au Canada », *SHA*, vol. 17, n° 2, p. 58-68. Entre 1908 et 1914, Clarence Cormier et Jean H. LeBlanc, tous deux natifs de Cap-Pelé, occupent tour à tour les postes de président et secrétaire-trésorier de la Société l'Assomption. Nombre des pionniers, sont non seulement membres affiliés mais participants actifs dans le Parti républicain, e.g. Clarence Cormier, Ferdinand Richard – qui se présentera pour Gardner en 1909 – Elphège Léger, Hilaire Hébert, etc. ; tandis que le plus connu demeurera J. Henri Goguen de Leominster, élu en 1930 sous la bannière des démocrates.

les Acadiens-américains en politique Frank Allain et J. Henri Goguen élus à la Législative du Massachusetts, Ferdinand Richard, et, de la Louisiane, le sénateur Broussard, Dudley LeBlanc et le juge Joseph Breaux. Le clergé et les nationalistes de toutes les causes y sont également présents : les abbés Désiré F. Léger, André D. Cormier, Henri Cormier, Amable E. Monbourquette et Philippe Goguen ; les laïcs Henri P. LeBlanc, François G. J. Comeau et Rémi Benoit. Enfin, y figurent aussi les missives d'artistes comme Arthur LeBlanc et Anna Malenfant, de même que des compositions de Dominique S. Léger, le chantre des Acadiens-américains, sans oublier les historiens Placide Gaudet, Philias Bourgeois et Émile Lauvrière.

Cette correspondance touche donc à toutes les grandes causes nationalistes : le parc historique de Grand-Pré, la succursale La Tour versus le clergé irlandais de Moncton et la lutte pour une paroisse acadienne, une instruction en français, une campagne de refrancisation, un évêque acadien, les prises de position de Valentin Landry de *L'Évangélisme*, les campagnes de souscription du journal, ses hauts et ses bas, l'acadianisation de l'Église, l'émigration, les crises économiques qui secouent les villes américaines et qui ont un impact sur le niveau de vie de la communauté acadienne, ceux qui reviennent s'établir en Acadie, les campagnes de rapatriement et la colonisation, la sortie du film américain *Evangeline*³. Ces archives contiennent donc des documents inédits relatifs à divers secteurs de la collectivité acadienne à une époque qui lui fut déterminante au XX^e siècle.

3. CEA, Fonds Valentin-Landry, 7 ; Fonds Ferdinand-Robidoux, 4 ; Fonds Philippe-Goguen, 681 ; Fonds Henri-Goguen, non-côté. Coïncidemment, l'année 1930 apparaît comme significative pour les Acadiens-américains. Alors qu'un quasi saint, dans la personne de l'abbé Philippe Goguen, décédait « en odeur de sainteté », J.-Henri Goguen était élu à l'Assemblée de l'état du Massachusetts. Tous deux d'ailleurs, étaient nés en 1899 dans le comté de Kent. Lors de son décès à Moncton, l'abbé Goguen était attaché à la paroisse de l'Assomption. Ses parents déménagèrent à Gardner vers 1910. Voir ses funérailles qui font la manchette dans *L'Évangélisme*, 19 janvier 1930. En novembre 1930, le plus connu des hommes politiques acadiens-américains à l'échelle nationale, soit J.-Henri Goguen, était élu représentant du Massachusetts. Par la suite, il fut président de l'Union Saint-Jean-Baptiste de la Nouvelle-Angleterre. Natif de Cocagne, ses parents s'établirent à Leominster vers 1902. Pendant les années 1920, il a été une figure de proue de la Société l'Assomption. CEA, Dossiers généalogiques, Famille Goguen, correspondance de Clément Cormier avec J.-Henri Goguen. Sur le journalisme voir *L'Évangélisme*, *Le Moniteur Acadien*, *L'Acadien*, *L'Acadie* ; G. Beaulieu, *L'Évangélisme, 1887-1982*, Chaire d'études acadiennes et Éditions d'Acadie, Moncton, 1997. G. Bertrand, « La campagne de refrancisation de 1934 à Moncton », *SHA*, vol. 31, n° 3 et 4, 2000, p. 195-230.

LES ACADIENS-AMÉRICAINS

Le fonds Clarence-Cormier est le seul fonds d'archives qui nous soit parvenu détaillant le quotidien des Acadiens « aux États », et faisant état des chefs de file de la Nouvelle-Angleterre pendant l'époque allant de 1900 à 1930. On y trouve des lettres d'ouvriers de manufactures, de même que celles de fonctionnaires municipaux, d'épiciers, de gérants de commerces de chaussures, etc. Tout aussi intéressantes sont les lettres d'Acadiennes œuvrant dans l'administration des succursales de la Société l'Assomption⁴.

Ce fonds d'archives nous donne de plus, des renseignements de première main sur l'évolution de la prise de conscience du peuple acadien et ses diverses manifestations de 1895 à 1905. L'exploitation plus poussée des sources documentaires disponibles ouvre sur une multitude de recherches dont nous donnons ci-après un aperçu prospectif.

L'histoire de la Société l'Assomption commence lors d'une réunion tenue le 17 novembre 1902, à la maison du compatriote convaincu Jaddus V. Léger, originaire de Sainte-Marie (N.-B.), mais établi à Gardner, banlieue de Boston. Cette rencontre d'amis et de compatriotes en majorité natifs du sud-est du Nouveau-Brunswick, mena à la formation d'une « Société Nationale Acadienne »⁵. Voilà en somme la naissance de cette « grande idée », comme l'indique le titre d'un ouvrage racontant son histoire⁶. Mais toute idée remonte à plus loin...

C'est pendant la première moitié de la décennie 1860, que débute véritablement la migration d'Acadiens vers la Nouvelle-Angleterre, principalement à partir des comtés de Kent et de Westmorland, au Nouveau-Brunswick, du Cap-Breton, de Pubnico et de la Baie-Sainte-Marie en Nouvelle-Écosse, de même que des centres acadiens de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard. Cette grande vague migratoire avait été précédée, entre les années 1845 et 1850, d'une émigration plus restreinte vers le Bas-Canada, le Midwest américain, de même que la Californie où la fièvre de l'or battait son plein. Des départs sont signalés un peu partout, principalement du

4. CEA, Fonds Clarence-Cormier, *op. cit.*

5. CEA, Fonds Henri-P. LeBlanc, *op. cit.* L'Assomption, 1902 à 1905, ms ; E. Daigle, *Petite histoire d'une grande idée...*, *op. cit.*, p. 13-15.

6. E. Daigle, *ibid.*

Nouveau-Brunswick : Madawaska, Shippagan, Caraquet, Saint-Louis, Cocagne, Cap-Pelé et Memramcook⁷

L'odyssée de Polonie Porelle (1815-1914), qui, partie avec sa nombreuse famille de Cap-Pelé en 1849, passera par le Québec, le New Hampshire, le Vermont, puis reviendra à Cap-Pelé en 1868, pour enfin émigrer avec un de ses fils à Sanford, Maine, en 1896 pour y mourir presque centenaire, illustre les temps héroïques des émigrés. D'ailleurs, la succursale de Sanford portera à son honneur le nom de « Porelle » (voir Annexe II).

Les émigrés des années 1860 à 1900 s'établissent avant tout dans la région bostonnaise, bien qu'on en trouve d'autres dans le New Hampshire, le Connecticut, l'état de New York, en Pennsylvanie, comme Louis F. Richard, « professeur à Philadelphie » dans les années 1860, puis qui s'établit ensuite à Cocagne comme instituteur vers 1867. C'est lui que vise la première mention dans *Le Moniteur Acadien* d'un Acadien du Nouveau-Brunswick résidant aux États-Unis⁸.

À l'aube du XX^e siècle, selon un informateur, il y avait de 20 à 30 000 Acadiens et Acadiennes qui vivaient en Nouvelle-Angleterre⁹; ce chiffre

7. CEA, Dossiers généalogiques, Famille Porelle, Dosithée Porelle. *L'Évangélène*, 17 septembre 1913, *Le Moniteur Acadien*, septembre 1914. Voir C. Quintal, « L'émigrant acadien vers les États-Unis », *op. cit.* ; R. Brun, *De Grand-Pré à Kouchibougouac*, Éditions d'Acadie, Moncton, 1982, p. 94 ; L.-C. Daigle, *Histoire de Saint-Louis-de-Kent*, L'Imprimerie acadienne, Moncton, 1948, p. 148-151 ; Y. Léger, *op. cit.*, *L'Évangélène*, 17 septembre 1913 ; L.-C. Daigle, *op. cit.*, p. 151. Il est intéressant de souligner la date exacte, jour, mois et année, du départ de certains émigrés pour les États, qu'on retrouve dans divers documents, particulièrement pour les élites de la Société, voir CEA, Fonds Société l'Assomption, *op. cit.*, Album historique des pionniers.

8. L. LeBlanc, *Le Moniteur Acadien : inventaire de l'état civil*, vol. 1, Chez l'auteur, 1996, p. 102, 114 ; Sixte-Georges Hébert, p. 6, Louis F. Richard, p. 3 ; C.-J. d'Entremont, *La Survivance acadienne en Nouvelle-Angleterre*, dans C. Quintal, *op. cit.*, p. 8-17.

9. A. A. Brookes, « Out-Migration from the Maritimes Provinces, 1860-1900 : Some Preliminary Considerations », *Acadiensis*, vol. V, n° 2, 1976, p. 26-55 ; C. Quintal, *op. cit.*, p. 38 ; Y. Otis, B. Ramirez, « Nouvelles perspectives sur le mouvement d'émigration des Maritimes vers les États-Unis, 1906-1930 », *Acadiensis*, vol. XXVIII, n° 1, p. 27-45 ; M. Roy, « Peuplement et croissance démographique en Acadie », dans Jean Daigle, *Les Acadiens des Maritimes*, CEA, 1980, p. 177. En 1901, il y a 80 000 Acadiens au Nouveau-Brunswick, dont 31 140 au sud-est, d'où sont originaires la majorité des Acadiens-américains et les fondateurs de la Société l'Assomption.

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paraît exagéré de beaucoup. En 1903, les plus gros centres de la Nouvelle-Angleterre ont à peu près 5 000 personnes d'origine acadienne. Le premier décompte des Acadiens est celui de 1921, statistiques communiquées par Clarence Cormier à l'historien Émile Lauvrière, alors qu'on dénombre près de 22 000 Acadiens. Ils sont répartis au Massachusetts (15 000), au Maine (5 000, dont 1 800 à Rumford), et enfin 1 500 au New Hampshire et au Connecticut. Les centres les plus populeux sont Fitchburg et New Bedford ayant chacun 2 500 Acadiens, suivis de Boston, 1 600, et Gardner et Lynn, 1 500 chacun¹⁰. Malheureusement, aucun chiffre n'apparaît pour la Louisiane, l'état de New York, le Michigan, le Mid-West et l'Ouest américain.

L'état du Maine accueille très tôt des centaines d'émigrés qui travaillent en un premier temps dans l'industrie forestière, dont certains s'établissent par la suite dans la région bostonnaise. D'autres s'aventurent plus à l'ouest, soit au Utah, où meurt en 1869 S. G. Hébert, natif de Tidiche ; en Ohio, où se rendent des ouvriers des carrières de Memramcook. En 1885, le D' Philias Bourgeois, dentiste de Shédiac, s'établit au Kansas, où il gère une pharmacie. Il revient à Shédiac en 1887. En 1885, le D' Philippe J. LeBlanc de Saint-Anselme s'inscrit au collège de médecine de Detroit dont il recevra son diplôme et l'année suivante il rend visite à son confrère au Kansas. En 1896, comme quelques autres de ses compatriotes acadiens, il participe à la ruée vers l'or du Klondike après quoi il s'établit en Alaska. Enfin, d'autres émigrent en Californie, par exemple Joseph Breau, jeune homme de Cocagne qui y meurt en 1883 « il n'était marié que depuis une couple de mois »¹¹.

Dès la fin des années 1870, Fitchburg, population totale de 12 500, attirait les émigrés acadiens ; on y trouve alors quelques patronymes acadiens sur les quelque 300 patronymes canadiens-français. En 1902, la population acadienne comptait 400 familles et près de 2 000 Acadiens, pour la plupart résidant dans la « p'tite Acadie » de Cleghorn. Dès 1893, Gardner

10. CEA, Fonds Clarence-Cormier, *op. cit.*, Émile Lauvrière à Clarence Cormier, Waltham, 5 mai 1921.

11. L. Leblanc, *Le Moniteur Acadien...*, *op. cit.*, p. 6 ; R. Brun, *Les Acadiens à Moncton*, Chez l'auteur, 1999, p. 176-177 ; R.-G. LeBlanc, « Un portrait de la jeunesse masculine de Cap-Pelé au début du siècle », *SHMR*, vol. 4, n° 1, 1996, p. 44-53.

comptait déjà 30 noms de familles acadiennes, soit LeBlanc 8, Cormier et Goguen chacune 6 et Richard 5. En 1903, 133 familles résident à Gardner, soit 887 personnes, dont 230 au-dessus de 14 ans¹². Un des résidents était Ferdinand Richard, le théoricien et organisateur des patriotes, le premier qui mit sur papier l'idée d'une société fraternelle acadienne. Il était petit cousin de Clarence Cormier.

Très tôt Waltham deviendra un pôle d'attraction pour les Acadiens du sud-est du Nouveau-Brunswick. Dès 1868, s'y trouvent établis Dominique S. Léger, – auteur de la constitution de la Société l'Assomption et de chants patriotiques et responsable de la fondation de la Caisse écolière – ainsi que Placide et Zoël F. Léger. Au milieu des années 1890, Ferdinand M. Cormier et son fils Clarence, de Memramcook et Jean H. LeBlanc de Cap-Pelé, fondateurs de la Société l'Assomption s'y établissent¹³. Parmi les 1 500 Acadiens de Lynn en 1902, se trouvait Dominique S. Léger, anciennement de Waltham. Un autre résident de Lynn, lui aussi fondateur de la Société, était Jude A. Landry, natif de Memramcook, frère de Sir Pierre-Amand Landry. Lynn attirait la jeunesse acadienne, comme anglophone des Maritimes, avec son industrie de la chaussure, une des plus importantes du Massachusetts.

Parmi les 60 familles de Worcester se trouvait celle de P. Livain Vautour de Saint-Louis, participant aux premières manifestations patriotiques. À New Bedford, autre centre important, on retrouvait Urbain P. Arsenault de Grande-Digue, ouvrier de la première heure du réveil,

12. CEA, Fonds Clarence-Cormier, Jaddus V. Léger à Clarence Cormier, Gardner, 10 mai 1903 ; *Extracts of Franco-American Marriage Records, 1873-1911*, Acadian Cultural Society, Fitchburg, 1988 ; P.-D. LeBlanc, « De la ferme à l'usine : les Acadiens dans Fitchburg, Massachusetts, 1880-1910 », dans C. Quintal, *op. cit.*, p. 159-170 ; E. Daigle, *Petite histoire d'une grande idée...*, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

13. CEA, Fonds Placide-Gaudet, correspondance, 1-66-9, Lettre de Dominique S. Léger à Placide Gaudet, Waltham, 13 décembre 1897 ; CEA, Fonds Clarence-Cormier, Correspondance échangée entre Clarence Cormier et Dominique S. Léger, 1902-1910 ; *L'Évangélise*, 14 août 1914, repris du journal le *Temps*, Ottawa, Notice biographique en première page sur Dominique Léger, séjournant chez sa fille dans la capitale ; C. Cormier, « Gilbert A. Girouard, un brillant début de carrière (1846-1885) », *SHA*, vol. 12, n° 3, 1981, p. 100-102 ; *L'Évangélise*, 8 septembre 1915, décès de Dominique S. Léger ; *Ibid.*, 9 septembre 1948, décès de son fils Dosithée D. Léger ; E. Daigle, *Petite histoire d'une grande idée...*, *op. cit.*, p. 30 ; A. J. Léger, *Les grandes lignes...*, *op. cit.*, p. 39-40 ; K. Petersen, *Waltham Rediscovered*, Peter E. Randall Publisher, Portsmouth, N.H., 1988, p. 196, 303 ; Placide et Zoël Léger, de Wotton, Québec, parents originaires de Memramcook.

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propriétaire d'un des principaux commerces des Acadiens de la Nouvelle-Angleterre. Il est au nombre de ceux qui reviennent en Acadie après avoir fait fortune. En 1913, il se fit construire une somptueuse résidence à Grande-Digue et la famille y aménagea l'année suivante¹⁴. Boston était la ville où résidaient Rémi Benoit, Tranquille Gallant, orfèvre, ainsi que Raphaël S. Léger, nationaliste de la première heure. Un autre des résidents de Boston dans la décennie 1890 était Clément S. Cormier, grand-père de Clément Cormier, fondateur de l'Université de Moncton¹⁵.

En plus de ces concentrations d'Acadiens, mentionnons celles de Chelsea, à Slaterville, à Woonsocket et Clifton au Massachusetts. Dans le Maine, à Westbrook résidait Sozime Arsenault, natif de Rogersville, pionnier de l'implantation de l'Assomption dans l'état. En 1902, on trouve à Westbrook 58 familles acadiennes, soit 271 personnes. Il y a aussi les 500 Acadiens de Rumford Falls et les 40 familles de Yarmouth¹⁶.

LA CONDITION SOCIALE DE LA MAJORITÉ DES ÉMIGRÉS

Tous ce qui est beau et bon, les autres en jouissent, tandis que pour nous, c'est toujours la même chose, il nous faut coudre, coudre du matin au

14. CEA, Fonds Olive-Poirier, pas classé ; *Moniteur Acadien*, 20 novembre 1913 ; M.-A. Poirier, « Profils, Olive Poirier », *Brin d'histoire, Cahier de la Société historique de Grande-Digue*, n° 7, juin 2000, p. 41-43 ; Fitchburg Public Library, Fonds Zoël J. Richard, Copies of Reprints from the Cleghorn Courier Pages, « Sawyer the Uncommon Man ». Il s'agit de Magloire JAILLET (1840-1914) entrepreneur en construction, originaire de Bouctouche, émigré en 1886 à Fitchburg. Pendant la décennie 1890, « he probably did fifty percent of the construction work in Cleghorn, besides the other homes and tenement blocks he built in south Fitchburg and other sections of the city » ; *Le Moniteur Acadien*, 20 septembre 1889 : le « plus habiles entrepreneurs de bâtiments de Fitchburg (...) il emploie un bon nombre d'ouvriers, ses compatriotes. » Vers 1899-1900, il revient s'établir à Bouctouche, voir Recensement du Canada, 1901, N.-B., Kent, Wellington, p. 3.

15. CEA, Fonds Clément-Cormier, 177-1.

16. CEA, Fonds Clarence-Cormier, Sozime Arsenault à Clarence Cormier, Westbrook, 11 mai 1903 ; Fred Maillet à Clarence Cormier, Rumford Mills, 1^{er} mai 1903. En particulier, la correspondance de Narcisse Cormier, Sanford, 1912-1920. Il était aussi correspondant de Sanford et Westbrook pour les journaux *L'Évangélise* et le *Moniteur Acadien* ; M.P. Richard, « From Franco-American to American : The Case of Sainte-Famille, an Assimilating Parish of Lewiston, Maine », dans *Histoire sociale / Social History*, vol. XXXI, n° 61, 1998, p. 71-94.

soir, et du soir au matin, et nous ne sommes point récompensées de nos peines¹⁷

S'il fallait dresser un profil des Acadiens émigrés à la périphérie de Boston pendant la décennie 1890-1910, on pourrait dire qu'ils sont jeunes, pour la plupart dans la vingtaine, célibataires ou seulement mariés depuis quelques années. D'ailleurs, ce même phénomène de mouvement migratoire du rural à l'urbain se manifestait chez les Canadiens français, au Canada anglais, aux États-Unis et en Europe.

La caractéristique dominante de cette émigration est le déménagement du milieu rural au milieu urbain. Néanmoins, il existe aussi un mouvement du milieu rural à un milieu rural, particulièrement pour des Acadiens du sud-est du Nouveau-Brunswick, qui vont travailler dans les chantiers forestiers et les fermes de la Nouvelle-Angleterre, tandis que ceux des villages côtiers néo-écossais éliront domiciles dans les centres de pêcheries. L'autre caractéristique est que la majorité des émigrants est composée de jeunes filles et de femmes, du moins pour les anglophones des Maritimes. À preuve contraire, on peut supposer qu'il en fut de même pour les francophones. Ceci est important en raison du rôle central que la femme remplit dans la production domestique rurale. Celle-ci s'occupait de la confection des hardes et butin, de la fabrication des étoffes et lainages, de la préparation de la nourriture et de sa conservation, en plus des travaux de la maison et de la ferme. N'oublions pas pour autant l'importante main-d'œuvre féminine dans les conserveries de homard.

Le plus ardent désir de la plupart des émigrants acadiennes était d'améliorer leur position sociale, bref, de réaliser leurs rêves « aux États », en somme *the American Dream*. Selon un observateur de l'époque, la raison véritable se résumait dans leur « désir de se joindre à un peuple qui leur semblait progresser plus rapidement sur la voie de la richesse, du confort et de la liberté »¹⁸. Mais en contrepartie, certains auteurs affirment que

17. H. L. d'Entremont, *Nos filles acadiennes*, *L'Évangélina*, 28 mars 1888 ; Paroles d'une jeune ouvrière acadienne travaillant dans une filature bostonnaise avant de se suicider.

18. C. Quintal, *op. cit.*, p. 42 ; B. Beatie, « Going up to Lynn : Single, Maritime – Born women in Lynn, Massachusetts, 1879-1930 », *Acadiensis*, vol. XXII, n° 1, p. 65-86 ; A.A. Brookes, *op. cit.*, p. 33-35, 45-47 ; B. LeBlanc, R.-G. LeBlanc, « La culture matérielle traditionnelle en Acadie », dans *L'Acadie des Maritimes*, J. Daigle, Éditions d'Acadie, Moncton, 1993, p. 601-624.

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*l'émigration d'*enterprising youth was itself a factor contributing to the economic decline of the Maritimes,*¹⁹ entre 1870 à 1930.*



Jeunesse acadienne à Fitchburg en 1921.

De g. à d. : Ida Hébert (à Charles), Elphège Léger (à Elphège), Irène Hébert (à Charles), David Léger (à Elphège), Hélène Poirier (à Fidèle), Albert Poirier (à Fidèle) et Léa Hébert (à Charles). Les Hébert et Léger sont originaires de Grande-Digue, alors que les Poirier sont de Shédiac. (CEA, coll. Edgar-Léger).

En jetant un coup d'œil sur l'origine des 86 membres de la succursale de la Société l'Assomption à Boston, on remarque que treize sont natifs de Westmorland et huit de Kent pour un total de 21 ; dix-sept sont du Cap-Breton : Arichat, Chéticamp et un médecin de Tracadie ; d'autres sont originaires de la Baie-Sainte-Marie : Comeauville, Grosses-Coques, Anse-des-Belliveau, Pointe-de-l'Église, dont un natif de Haverhill, Mass., mais dont

19. B. Beattie, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

les parents sont de la Baie ; trois de Pomquet, un de Chezzetcook ; six sont du nord-est du Nouveau-Brunswick : Bathurst, Belledune, Grand-Anse, Petit-Rocher et Shippagan ; un vient du Madawaska, et enfin six des membres sont originaires des Îles-de-la-Madeleine²⁰.

Certains des émigrés acadiens décidèrent de revenir à leur lieu d'origine, surtout quand se manifestèrent des crises économiques comme celle du milieu des années 1890. Dans certains cas, le séjour aux États leur avait fourni une occasion d'apprentissage et une manière d'accumuler des économies, leur permettant de revenir en Acadie et de se lancer dans diverses entreprises. Le même phénomène s'applique aux Canadiens français. De nombreuses femmes acadiennes, comme celles de Manchester au New Hampshire, partageaient leur vie entre « le ‘temps industriel’ du travail dans les usines de textile et le ‘temps familial’ consacré à élever leurs enfants »²¹.

Parmi les emplois des membres de la succursale de Cambridge/Boston, entre 1904-1906, on remarque une prédominance du métier de charpentier et de métiers associés, comme peintre, plâtrier et maçon ; parmi les quelque 86 membres de cette succursale, près de la moitié pratiquent l'un d'eux. L'historiographie américaine affirme que les charpentiers acadiens ont construit Waltham, comme ils le firent pour les autres « petits Canada » où ils élirent domicile. Ils étaient tout aussi adroits à la grosse charpenterie qu'à la menuiserie. De plus ils travaillaient pour presque rien. Les autres occupations les plus nombreuses se présentent ainsi : six journaliers, quatre commis, et deux ingénieurs. On trouve également une personne dans

20. CEA, Fonds Succursale Grand-Pré, 87. Procès verbal. *Age and Schooling, Certificates, 1888-1913*, Microfilm, New Bedford Public Library, Mass. Il s'agit de données sur les adolescents et les enfants travaillant dans les usines et la preuve de leur âge et parfois leur lieu de naissance.

21. C. Quintal, *op. cit.*, p. 152. Dominique J. Richard et Honoré Bourque, après un séjour à Lynn, ouvrirent des fabriques de chaussures à Shédiac. Félicien Thibodeau se perfectionna dans le métier de charron dans la même ville, puis ouvrit une boutique à Shédiac ; voir R. Brun, *Shédiac, l'histoire se raconte*, Shédiac, La ville de Shédiac, 1994, p. 174-177. Le plus connu des menuisiers acadiens de Moncton, Philippe N. LeBlanc, se perfectionna dans ce métier à Fitchburg, puis s'établit à Moncton. Le barbier coiffeur Marcel Robichaud de Moncton apprit son métier à New Bedford, puis établit son propre salon à Moncton. Voir R. Brun, *Les Acadiens à Moncton*, *op. cit.*, p. 78-82, 142. T.K. Hareven, « L'histoire de la famille et la complexité du changement social », *Cahiers d'histoire*, t. 45, n° 1, 2, 2000, p. 9-34, 205-232. P.-A. Linteau, « Les migrants américains et franco-américains au Québec, 1792-1940 », *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française*, vol. 53, n° 4, 2000, p. 593-594.

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chacune des professions ou des métiers suivants : avocat, architecte, médecin, machiniste, gérant, surintendant, inspecteur de viande, garçon de restaurant, sellier, coupeur de poisson et agent, entre autres²².

Les salaires mensuels approximatifs pendant les années 1870 et 1880, sont les suivants : *from \$ 30.00 to \$ 40.00 for workmen or unskilled laborers, \$ 60.00 to \$ 75.00 for skilled laborers, \$ 75.00 to \$ 90.00 for carpenters, \$ 35.00 to \$ 40.00 for dressmakers, \$ 12.00 to \$ 16.00 for maids*²³. Les jeunes filles acadiennes de la périphérie bostonnaise ne gagnaient pour tout salaire que 2,50 \$ à 3,50 \$ par semaine. Au même temps, la pension mensuelle pour un homme était de 20 \$ et de 12 \$ pour une femme²⁴. Le salaire de la main-d'œuvre féminine dans les filatures et cordonneries de Moncton était en moyenne de 3 \$ par semaine, les enfants et adolescents recevaient de 1,50 à 2 \$ comme salaire hebdomadaire. Le salaire des hommes était le double de celui des femmes. À la même époque les empaqueteuses de homard gagnaient une trentaine de dollars pour trois mois de travail²⁵.

À la fin des années 1888 et jusqu'à la dépression économique de 1893, les salaires de la firme de la *Waltham Watch*, l'une des plus importantes de la région de Boston, où travaillent des Acadiens sont de 8 à 10 \$ par semaine pour les hommes et de 5 à 6 \$ pour la main-d'œuvre féminine ; pour leur part les nouveaux employés commencent à 50 cents par jour. En somme, c'est dans ces grandes manufactures, pour la plupart les filatures, que travaillaient la majorité des adultes et enfants parmi les quelque dix mille Acadiens de la Nouvelle-Angleterre au début du XX^e siècle.

22. CEA, Fonds Succursale Grand-Pré ; CEA, Fonds Zoël J. Richard ; *Le Moniteur Acadien*, 20 septembre 1889 ; R. Brun, *De Grand-Pré à Kouchibougouac*, op. cit., 40, 155 ; R. Brun, *Les Acadiens à Moncton*, op. cit., p. 78-79. Selon E. Lauvrière, *La tragédie d'un peuple*, Plon, Paris, 1924, II, p. 387, les chômeurs acadiens étaient traités « de Chinois de l'Est » ; P.-D. LeBlanc, op. cit. ; K. Petersen, *Waltham Rediscovered*, op. cit.

23. F.M. Chevalier, *The Role of French National Societies in the Socio-Cultural Evolution of the Franco-Americans of New England from 1860 to the Present*, Thèse Ph. D., 1972, Catholic University of America, p. 6 ; K. Petersen, op. cit., p. 303.

24. F.M. Chevalier, *ibid.*

25. R. Brun, *Les Acadiens à Moncton*, op. cit., p. 43-44 ; G. Lafleur, « L'industrialisation et le travail rémunéré des femmes : Moncton, 1881-1891 », dans D. Hickey, *Moncton 1871-1913*, Moncton, Éditions d'Acadie, 1990, p. 39-44.

Une autre caractéristique de cette main-d'œuvre, comme celle du Canada-français, était son attitude anti-syndicale, surtout pendant les décennies 1880 et 1890. Cette accusation émanait des syndicalistes émigrés d'Irlande et de la Grande-Bretagne depuis une génération, qui monopolisaient les postes supérieurs dans les filatures. Certains de ceux-ci refusaient l'emploi aux parlants français. Issu d'un milieu rural, l'Acadien voit dans le travail industriel une mobilité sociale réussie. Néanmoins, au début du nouveau siècle, une minorité œuvrant dans les métiers de construction et dans l'industrie de la chaussure n'hésite pas à s'engager activement dans les syndicats²⁶.

Très peu d'entre eux figuraient parmi les pionniers de la Société l'Assomption et sur les bureaux de direction des succursales américaines. Les six délégués de Waltham à la fondation de la Société et qui occupèrent plus tard les postes de direction de la succursale, sont un épicer, un agent immobilier, un commis de bureau et un comptable de magasin ; deux d'entre eux étaient d'anciens instituteurs.

Au milieu de la décennie 1890, on trouve des Acadiens dans les agglomérations de Gardner, Fitchburg, Lynn, New Bedford et Waltham exploitant divers commerces. Charles R. Poirier gère une épicerie et son épouse un salon de mode. Sara Bourgeois gère aussi un salon de mode ; tandis que Jude Poirier est marchand de poisson. Placide Hébert et Thaddée Robichaud sont propriétaires de manufactures de souliers. François X. Vautour, ancien professeur à la Baie-Sainte-Marie et au Collège Saint-Joseph dans les années 1880, deviendra épicer à New Bedford. C'est d'ailleurs un épicer et en outre, un spéculateur dans l'immobilier qui est probablement un des plus riches Acadiens de la Nouvelle-Angleterre, soit Urbain S. Arsenault, mentionné plus haut. En 1904, il vend à des financiers qui veulent y établir d'importantes filatures, une partie des ses propriétés de New Bedford, pour le montant de 60 000 \$, somme astronomique pour l'époque²⁷.

26. K. Petersen, *op. cit.*, p. 277, 196 ; P.T. Silvia, « Neighbors From the North : French-Canadian Immigrants vs. Trade Unionism in Fall River, Massachusetts », dans C. Quintal, *Steeple and Smokestacks*, *op. cit.*, p. 145-163 ; Y Roby, *op. cit.*, p. 82-89.

27. *L'Évangéline*, 24 août 1899, décès de François X. Vautour ; *Les Acadiens à l'étranger*, 24 mai 1894 ; *Moncton Transcript*, 3 janvier 1924, décès d'Urbain Arsenault.



François-Xavier Vautour devant son magasin général
à New Bedford, Mass. v. 1896. (CEA, PB2-11).

L'ORIGINE SOCIALE DES FONDATEURS DE L'ASSOMPTION

La liste à la fin de cet article esquisse le portrait des 34 délégués du Massachusetts réunis à Fitchburg le 30 mai 1903, lors de l'assemblée de fondation d'une société nationale. Près de trente délégués sont natifs des comtés de Kent et de Westmorland, en particulier des paroisses de Bouctouche, Cocagne, Grande-Digue, Memramcook et Sainte-Marie. Trois des représentants sont natifs des communautés acadiennes de Tracadie (N.-B.), de la Baie-Sainte-Marie et d'Escousse (N.-É). Six habitent Fitchburg, Gardner, New Bedford et Waltham ; trois sont de Lynn, deux de Chelsea et Worcester, enfin un chacun de Boston et Lowell, donc tous de l'état du Massachusetts.

Certains des délégués ont fait leurs premières armes nationalistes comme participants aux conventions acadiennes de Memramcook et de Miscouche. Au moins six ont étudié au Collège Saint-Joseph. Jean H. LeBlanc, sera diplômé en études commerciales du Collège Saint-Joseph. Orateur hors pair, il occupera pendant plusieurs années le poste de secrétaire trésorier de la société. Il est responsable de la fondation des premières succursales au Nouveau-Brunswick et en Nouvelle-Écosse en 1905 et 1906, de même que celles de la Nouvelle-Angleterre²⁸. Quelques autres des délégués sont d'anciens instituteurs, soit Jean H. LeBlanc, Dominique S. Léger, Ferdinand M. Cormier, Elphège Léger, Jaddus V. Léger et Philias Richard.

Dominique S. Léger, le plus âgé des pionniers, devient le premier chancelier général de la Société en 1903. C'est un instituteur qui a beaucoup voyagé pour son époque. Vers 1863, il quitte Saint-Anselme (N.-B.) et on le trouve l'année suivante à l'île de la Guadeloupe, puis il se rend dans le sud des États-Unis. Dans une lettre à Placide Gaudet en 1897, il explique qu'il a « passé dans toutes les États à l'Est du Mississippi », pour enfin s'établir à Waltham vers 1868, où il pratique le métier de maçon. Au tout début de 1871, il revient en Acadie et s'établit à Sainte-Marie (N.-B.), où il est le contremaître d'une compagnie forestière, propriété de Gilbert A. Girouard (1846-1885), futur député à Ottawa. Vers 1881, Léger s'établit en affaires dans l'hôtellerie et l'épicerie avec ses frères, à Moncton. Enfin, vers 1885, il va s'établir à Waltham, puis à Lynn en 1900.

Il s'impliquera très tôt dans la vie culturelle et patriotique des Acadiens de la Nouvelle-Angleterre. Le 30 mai 1903, il sera le président honoraire lors de l'assemblée de fondation de la Société l'Assomption. Son *Hymne National Acadien*, sur l'air de l'*Ave Maris Stella*, sera adopté par les succursales américaines et deviendra le chant national des Acadiens de la

28. CEA, Fonds Clarence-Cormier, Correspondance entre Jean H. LeBlanc et Clarence Cormier, 1905-1910 ; Correspondance relative à « l'Affaire Jean H. LeBlanc », alors que LeBlanc veut poursuivre devant les tribunaux américains la Société l'Assomption au sujet d'une loterie ; CEA, Fonds Antoine-J.-Léger, 21-1-1, Correspondance entre Antoine-J. Léger, Jean H. LeBlanc et Philippe Saint-Cœur, 17 septembre-25 octobre 1917 ; CEA, Fonds Clarence-Cormier, Lettre de Napoléon LeBlanc à Clarence Cormier, Rumford, 2 décembre 1917, « c'est un traître à la Société » ; E. Daigle, *op. cit.*, p. 39 ; *L'Évangélène*, 25 novembre 1954, décès de Jean H. LeBlanc ; U.J. Bourgeois, *La paroisse du Cap-Pelé*, *op. cit.*

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Nouvelle-Angleterre. Lors de soirées bénéfices, en plus d'entonner l'hymne, on servait des poutines râpées²⁹!

Pour sa part, Ferdinand M. Cormier (1855-v1913) a milité dans diverses organisations acadiennes de Waltham, dont le club Acadien Rochambeau et il devient le président du comité du Congrès acadien ou Convention nationale de Waltham en 1902. C'est la première grande manifestation patriotique des Acadiens transplantés en Nouvelle-Angleterre. Ferdinand M. Cormier prend une part active dans la formation de la Société l'Assomption. Lui-même sera l'un des vice-présidents honoraires de la « Société l'Assomption des États-Unis », précurseur de la Société, tandis que son fils, Clarence en deviendra secrétaire archiviste. Clarence sera aussi président général de l'Assomption de 1908 à 1910 et chancelier de 1910 à 1913³⁰.

LE RÉVEIL DU PATRIOTISME ACADIEN-AMÉRICAIN

Certains des émigrés des futures « p'tites Acadies » ne tardèrent pas à manifester leur origine par la formation de sociétés acadiennes. Une des premières fut créée en 1889, soit la *Société des Acadiens Français de Boston*. Le comité était composé de Tranquille Gallant, président ; A. P. Comeau, vice-président ; Raphaël S. Léger, secrétaire archiviste ; Abraham

29. *L'Évangéline*, 14 août 1914, *op. cit.*, voir note 13, au sujet des frères de Dominique Léger, Onésime et Raphaël, voir R. Brun, *Les Acadiens à Moncton*, *op. cit.*, p. 62, 11-113, 119-121. Pendant les années 1886-1903, Raphaël Léger, instituteur, époux de Sara LeBlanc, fille d'Olivier LeBlanc de Sainte-Marie, député fédéral et provincial, était officier des douanes canadiennes aux îles Saint-Pierre et Miquelon, voir E. LeBlanc, *La vie à Sainte-Marie, La paroisse de Sainte-Marie, Sainte-Marie*, 1984, p. 154. Il revint s'établir à Moncton vers 1902 et fut membre de la succursale La Tour et membre fondateur et secrétaire archiviste de 1905 à 1909 de l'Alliance Nationale ; CEA, Fonds Alliance Nationale, 127.1. Ses funérailles, en septembre 1909, à l'église Saint-Bernard, Moncton (où il avait été directeur du chœur) prennent des allures nationalistes, voir *L'Évangéline, Moncton Transcript*, 9-12 septembre 1909. Au sujet des poutines râpées, voir CEA, Fonds Clarence-Cormier, Arthur Williams (Bristol) à Clarence Cormier, Sanford, Maine, 27 mai 1923. À Fitchburg, lors de soirées sociales, l'orchestre des frères Gaudet faisait les frais du divertissement, tandis qu'à Lynn c'était celle des frères Léger, voir *Le Moniteur Acadien*, 4 février 1909. Des complaintes acadiennes étaient aussi chantées, voir D. Deschênes, « The Dream of a Better Life in the Songs of Departure for the United States », p. 431-498, dans C. Quintal, *Steeple and Smokestacks*, *op. cit.*

30. *L'Assomption*, mars-avril, 1964.

Gould, trésorier ; A. T. LeBlanc, secrétaire correspondant ; Michel Landry, sergent et Félix Saint-Cœur, secrétaire trésorier³¹.

C'est à Boston qu'eut lieu la première célébration outre-frontière de l'Assomption le 15 août 1888, « la fête nationale des Acadiens... la première fois qu'elle fut jamais célébrée dans les États-Unis »³². En août 1889, des Acadiens de plusieurs petites villes avoisinantes, Stoneham, Slaterville et Tanton se réunirent à Boston pour continuer la fête, alors que des discours patriotiques furent prononcés par Raphaël S. Léger, Wilfrid F. Duguay et J. B. LeBlanc³³.

Se remémorant cette époque de fierté, un témoin oculaire raconte le jour où fut hissé pour la première fois le drapeau acadien aux États-Unis :

La première fête acadienne qui à été faite aux États à été faite le 15 août 1895. On a eut la messe à l'église française à Boston. L'église était bien remplis des Acadiens de toute les villes de la Nouvelle-Angleterre venue pour fêter. C'est moi Anselme M. Léger qui a parti l'idée de fêter cette fête et sa ma pris 2 ans à l'organiser. J'ai été assister par Tranquille Gallant, Raphael S. Léger et Pierre D. LeBlanc. C'est moi qui a fait faire le premier Drapeau acadien et qui a fait le plan. C'est Madame Tranquille Gallant qui la fait et à flotter pour la première fois dans l'église...

L'orgue était touché par Tranquille Gallant. Le chœur de chant était diriger par Raphael S. Léger et Pierre D. LeBlanc... Je dois faire mention de William Duguay qui voyagea dans les États de la Nouvelle-Angleterre pour annoncer dans toute les places qu'il passa que l'on allait fêter L'Assomption à Waltham... Les jeunes hommes avaient organiser une partie de Base Ball qu'ils on jouer dans le Norumbega Park... Je vous assure que quand le Drapeau acadien à été monter il y a eu un gros Hourra par la vue du premier Drapeau acadien vue aux États. J'ai encore en ma possession ce Drapeau là que je conserve avec soin...³⁴.

En 1899, les Acadiens de Waltham fondent un club connu sous le nom de Club Acadien Français Catholique. Parmi les officiers il y a Ferdinand Cormier, son fils Clarence comme trésorier, Jean H. LeBlanc, secrétaire et Dominique S. Léger. Certains des patriotes se rendent à la Convention de la Société Nationale l'Assomption, tenue à Arichat en 1900. Ils sont

31. *Courrier des Provinces Maritimes (CPM)*, 20 décembre 1889.

32. *CPM*, 10 octobre 1889.

33. *Ibid.*

34. CEA, Fonds Anselme-M.-Léger, 695, Journal 1887-1929, p. 256-259.

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nommés à la commission des « Acadiens des États-Unis », dont le rapporteur est Rémi Benoit, premier président de la future Société l'Assomption. Parmi les membres on remarque les médecins H. C. Haché et Sigefroi Belliveau, avec Tranquille Gallant, Wilfrid F. Duguay, Pierre LeBlanc, Ferdinand Richard, Charles R. Poirier, Elphège S. Léger et Urbain P. Arsenault, originaires du sud-est du Nouveau-Brunswick ; ainsi que Thomas F. Doucet, Daniel LeBlanc, Auguste et Louis Borneuf de la Baie-Sainte-Marie³⁵. Ceux-ci, avec les patriotes à la périphérie bostonnaise, seront responsables du « Congrès Acadien » tenu à Waltham le 16 août 1902, sans contredit l'événement qui a précipité, l'année suivante, la fondation de la future Société l'Assomption.

Le Congrès fut en somme la première grande réunion de la « parenté des États » avec « la grande visite » de l'élite nationaliste de la mère patrie et du juge Joseph Breaux, représentant des cousins louisianais. En bref, vingt et un ans plus tard les Acadiens-américains ressuscitaient la première convention acadienne tenue en 1881 à Memramcook. Malheureusement, la délégation de près de 200 Acadiens des Maritimes qu'on attendait ne fut pas au rendez-vous. Seulement une poignée s'y rendirent, membres de l'élite acadienne, mais on ne vit personne parmi les gens ordinaires³⁶. Les têtes d'affiche acadiennes-américaines furent le président du Congrès, Dominique S. Léger qui y alla d'un discours magistral et Jean H. LeBlanc le maître de cérémonie, orateur qu'on comparaît déjà au juge Pierre A. Landry. On estime qu'au moins 2 000 Acadiens-américains, presque tous de la périphérie bostonnaise, participaient au Congrès.

Les Acadiens des États-Unis, selon Antoine J. Léger, exprimaient le vœu suivant : « Nous mourrons ici ou bien nous ferons quelque chose de grand qui sera à l'honneur de notre race »³⁷, qui sera la fondation d'une société fraternelle de bienfaisance mutuelle.

35. CEA, Fonds Pierre-Amand-Landry, 5.2.6. Convention générale des Acadiens, Arichat, 1900.

36. CEA, Fonds Clarence-Cormier, *op. cit.*, L'abbé André D. Cormier à Clarence Cormier, Memramcook, 7 août 1902 ; E. Daigle, *op. cit.*, p. 15-20 ; A. J. Léger, *op. cit.*, p. 21-32.

37. A. J. Léger, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

FONDATION DE LA SOCIÉTÉ L'ASSOMPTION

Le ralliement de Waltham fut suivi le 21 septembre 1902 d'une réunion du comité exécutif du Congrès et du comité d'organisation comprenant une vingtaine de patriotes, sous la présidence de Dominique S. Léger et de l'organisateur Ferdinand Richard. On décida de fonder un comité unique sous le nom de « La Société l'Assomption des États-Unis ». Cette réunion fut suivie de celle du 17 novembre 1902 à Gardner, à la maison de Jaddus V. Léger, où prit forme l'idée d'une société mutuelle. On chargea Ferdinand Richard, secrétaire du groupe, de prendre contact avec divers Acadiens



Membres de la succursale de Waltham/Boston

Première rangée de g. à d. : Calixte Léger, Philippe Vienneau, Philippe Landry, Ferdinand Cormier, William Doucet. Deuxième rangée de g. à d. : Philias M. Belliveau, Donat S. Cormier, Philias Belliveau, Axime LeBlanc. Troisième rangée de g. à d. : Maurice Bourque, Clarence F. Cormier, Jean H. LeBlanc, Dominique Belliveau et Adolphe Cormier. (CEA, PC1-23).

influyants de la Nouvelle-Angleterre. Suite à ces démarches, Richard, pendant la veille de Noël 1902, rédigea une lettre à Jean H. LeBlanc où il exprimait sa pensée de « fonder une Société Nationale Acadienne », devenant ainsi le premier qui mit sur papier l'idée d'une société fraternelle acadienne³⁸.

Quelques jours plus tard, le 12 janvier, il écrit dans le même sens à David Goguen de Chelsea ; puis le 20 janvier, Richard fait part de son idée à Dominique S. Léger de Lynn, le chantre de la future Société, demandant son adhésion au projet³⁹. Ces destinataires étaient tous membres du comité exécutif de la « Société l'Assomption des États-Unis ». De la persévérance de Richard on dira qu'il en « était tanant » par bout⁴⁰. C'est le 30 mai 1903 qu'eut lieu à Fitchburg la première assemblée des 34 officiers et délégués de la future Société dans le sous-sol de l'église de Saint-Joseph (voir la liste à l'Annexe I). Il est décidé que l'on procède « à l'organisation d'une société de bienfaisance et de secours mutuels, exclusivement acadienne »⁴¹. On peut dire que ce jour-là, la grande idée s'était rendue à maturité.

Enfin, à Waltham le 7 septembre 1903, plus précisément à 2 h 30 de l'après-midi, la Société l'Assomption commence officiellement à exister, avec bureau chef à Waltham. Le 8 septembre fut retenu comme date de fondation, puisque la veille était un congé civil, la fête du Travail. Les membres du premier conseil exécutif élus furent les suivants : chancelier, Dominique S. Léger, Lynn ; président, Rémi Benoit, Lowell ; premier vice-président, Urbain Arsenault, New Bedford ; deuxième vice-président, Elphège Léger, Fitchburg ; secrétaire financier Jean H. LeBlanc, Waltham ; secrétaire archiviste, Jaddus V. Léger, Gardner ; trésorier, Hilaire Hébert, Fitchburg ; premier commissaire ordinateur, Ferdinand Richard, Gardner ; deuxième commissaire ordinateur, Jude Landry, Lynn ; directeurs : Clarence F. Cormier, Waltham ; P. Livain Vautour, Worcester et André Babineau, Chelsea⁴².

38. CEA, Fonds Clarence-Cormier, Correspondance, 1902-1903 ; H.-P. LeBlanc, « La genèse de la Société l'Assomption », série d'articles dans *L'Évangélène*, v 1953 ; Fonds Henri-P.-LeBlanc, 24-11-1, *op. cit.* ; *L'Assomption*, mars 1960, p. 8 ; avril-mai 1960, p. 7 ; mars-avril 1964, p. 1, 8 ; A. J. Léger, *op. cit.*, p. 39-46.

39. CEA, Fonds Clarence-Cormier, *op. cit.*, 1903.

40. *Ibid.*, Henri P. LeBlanc, « La genèse », *op. cit.*, article n° 13.

41. E. Daigle, *op. cit.*, p. 30-31 ; G. Bertrand, *op. cit.*, p. 200.

42. *L'Assomption*, *op. cit.* ; E. Daigle, *op. cit.* ; A. J. Léger, *op. cit.*

Lors de la première convention, tenue dans la Salle Lafayette à Waltham en 1904, la société comptait 454 membres répartis dans neuf succursales. La succursale « L'Acadie » de Waltham avait été fondée la première, soit le 18 septembre 1903, suivie par celles de Chelsea, Fitchburg, Gardner et New Bedford, toutes inaugurées avant la fin de l'année. La première succursale canadienne fut celle de Bouctouche en juillet 1904 suivie en 1905 de celles de Caraquet, Memramcook, Moncton, Barachois, Grand-Étang, Grande-Digue, Cormier-Village, Dupuis Corner, Baie-Egmont,



Les membres du Club amateur acadien de Waltham, Mass., 1904. Le quatrième homme de la droite dans la dernière rangée est Clarence-F. Cormier. (CEA, coll. Pauline Toner).

Sainte-Marie et Cap-Pelé, toutes fondées grâce au travail inlassable de l'organisateur Jean H. LeBlanc. En 1913, lors de son dixième anniversaire, la Société comptait 7 520 membres dans 115 succursales d'hommes et de femmes, dont 30 aux États-Unis et 85 au Canada.

La société fut incorporée au Nouveau-Brunswick en avril 1907, avec bureau d'affaires dans la province. Mais ce n'est qu'en septembre 1913 que

le bureau chef fut déménagé de Fitchburg à Moncton, puisqu'il devait se trouver dans la ville où résidait le trésorier général, soit Jean H. LeBlanc. Ce dernier avait aménagé à Moncton, mais dès novembre il est de retour à Fitchburg, puisque Clarence Cormier, chancelier, est nommé trésorier général, ce qui lui vaudra un déménagement à Moncton lui aussi. Mais à une convention spéciale, tenue à Moncton en novembre 1914, Cormier remet sa démission du Conseil exécutif et revient à Waltham pour reprendre son ancien emploi à la Boston et Waltham Transway.

Il continua quand même d'œuvrer dans la Société, demeurant le responsable de celle-ci en Nouvelle-Angleterre, en plus de siéger au conseil général dans différentes capacités jusqu'en 1930. Ceci explique la vaste correspondance qu'il entretint avec les chefs de file, tant avec ses confrères acadiens-américains que ceux en Acadie et ceci jusqu'à son décès en 1964, alors qu'il était âgé de 84 ans⁴³.

Le transfert du bureau chef à Moncton et la question de l'assurance-vie qui entraînait l'augmentation des taux d'assurance, provoquèrent un tollé chez les Acadiens-américains. Les dissidents, dont plusieurs avaient été les pionniers de la société mère, fondèrent le 20 septembre 1914, la Société l'Assomption des États-Unis. Elle entraîna dans son sillage 2 066 des 7 520 membres, perte qu'encaissa difficilement la société mère. Cette société parallèle s'en tint aux secours mutuels sans l'assurance. Après cinq années, elle comptait quinze succursales. Elle subsistait toujours en 1960, mais n'acquit jamais d'importance, et ses succursales se retrouvaient avant tout au Massachusetts⁴⁴.

En janvier 1968, s'éteignait Elphège S. Léger de Fitchburg, le presque centenaire doyen des officiers fondateurs de la Société l'Assomption de

43. *L'Assomption*, mars-avril 1964, p. 1, 8. Clarence Cormier maintint un contact et une correspondance assidus avec la Société américaine. Dans les années 1920, il participa aux congrès annuels et fut parfois invité comme conférencier ; les administrateurs sont de vieilles connaissances, Elphège Léger et Pierre LeBlanc, par exemple en 1923, voir : Elphège Léger à Clarence Cormier, New Bedford, 3 septembre 1923 ; Pierre LeBlanc, président, au même, Lowell, 27 novembre 1923.

44. CEA, Fonds Clarence-Cormier ; F.M. Chevalier, *op. cit.*, p. 148-149; A.J. Léger, *op. cit.*, p. 137 ; E. Daigle, *op. cit.*, p. 43-44.

même que de la Société l'Assomption des États-Unis⁴⁵. Ainsi disparaissait le dernier de cette génération qui dans la vingtaine, avait été responsable du réveil du patriotisme acadien-américain au tout début du siècle et au-delà, et qui avait fait mousser la cause du nationalisme en Acadie.

Au terme de cet exposé, il convient de souligner la grande richesse que contiendrait la mise à jour des archives des succursales et des chefs de file, non seulement de la Nouvelle-Angleterre mais aussi des provinces Maritimes. Ceci serait une façon de combler un vide archivistique de documents textuels et iconographiques, trop longtemps ignorés en Acadie, soit les papiers des milliers d'Acadiens-américains qui ont quitté l'Acadie depuis 1850. C'est avant tout la raison d'être de ce texte.

ANNEXE I

LISTE DES 34 OFFICIERS ET DÉLÉGUÉS, ASSEMBLÉE DU 30 MAI 1903⁴⁶

Les officiers

Jean H. LeBlanc (1868-1954), Cap-Pelé ; Nouvelle-Angleterre (N.-A.) v 1895 ; président, Waltham

Daniel LeBlanc (v 1865), Pointe-de-l'Église (N.-É.), N.-A. v 1890 ; vice-président, Boston

Clarence F. Cormier (1880-1864), Cap-Pelé ; N.-A. 1896 ; secrétaire, Waltham

Urbain P. Arsenault (1856-1924), Grande-Digue ; N.-A. v 1886 ; trésorier, New Bedford

Honoré L. Cormier (v 1875), Sainte-Marie ; N.-A. v 1895 ; ass.-trésorier, Gardner

Ferdinand S. Richard (1872-1916), Cocagne ; N.-A. v 1894 ; organisateur, Gardner

45. *L'Assomption*, août-septembre 1960, p. 8 ; *L'Évangélina*, 6 février 1968. À l'École Normale, Léger chambrait avec le futur M^e Patrice A. Chiasson. En juillet 1890, il s'en alla une première fois avec ses parents aux États, soit à Fitchburg. Après quelques années, la famille revint à Grande-Digue. Elphège fit la classe à Barachois et à Dover, puis retourna aux États en 1893, où il épousa à Fitchburg Régina LeBlanc en 1897. Le jeune ménage est de retour à Grande-Digue en 1900-1901, puis déménage aux États. Un de ses beaux-frères était Hilaire Hébert, trésorier de la Société l'Assomption et un opticien à l'aise de Fitchburg.

46. CEA, Fonds Clarence-Cormier, Lettre d'Henri-P. LeBlanc à Clarence Cormier, Moncton, 17 décembre 1952. La liste comprend les éléments suivants : nom, dates de naissance et de décès, lieu de naissance, année d'établissement en Nouvelle-Angleterre, position au sein de la Société et lieu de résidence.

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- Dominique S. Léger (1841-1915), Memramcook ; N.-A. 1884 ; président honoraire, Lynn
Jaddus V. Léger (1865-v1955), Sainte-Marie ; N.-A. v 1895 ; vice-président honoraire, Gardner
Amédée Cormier (1855), Sainte-Marie ; N.-A. v 1885 ; vice-président honoraire, Fitchburg
Olivier P. Jaillet (1881), Bouctouche ; N.-A. v 1899 ; vice-président honoraire, Gardner

Exécutifs

- Jude J. Boudreau (1857), Haute-Aboujagane ; N.-A. v 1893 ; New Bedford
Guillaume Bourgeois (1862), Grande-Digue ; N.-A. v 1890 ; North Oxford
Rémi Benoit (1842-1919), D'Escousse (N.-É) ; N.-A. 1897 ; Lowell
Ferdinand M. Cormier (1855-v1913), Memramcook ; N.-A. 1896 ; Waltham
David Goguen (1872-1929), Cocagne ; N.-A. v 1896 ; Chelsea
Joseph M. LeBlanc (v 1870), N.-B. ; N.-A. v 1895 ; Lynn
Calixte O. Léger (v 1870), Sainte-Marie ; N.-A. v 1895 ; Waltham
Charles A. Poirier (1874-1937), Grande-Digue ; N.-A. v 1887 ; New Bedford

Délégués

- Philippe L. Landry (v 1865), Sainte-Marie ; N.-A. v 1890 ; Waltham
Auguste Robichaud (1860), Grande-Digue ; N.-A. v 1890 ; Waltham
André C. Babineau (1873), Grande-Digue ; N.-A. v 1890 ; Chelsea
Fabien Goguen (1866), Cocagne ; N.-A. v 1890 ; Worcester
Pierre Brideau (1868), Tracadie ; N.-A. v 1895 ; Gardner
Hilaire Hébert (1860-1921), Grande-Digue ; N.-A. v 1890 ; Fitchburg
Lucien J. Dupuis (1876), Memramcook ; N.-A. v 1898 ; Gardner
Jonas D. Girouard (1864), Bouctouche ; N.-A. v 1888 ; Fitchburg
Elphège S. Léger (1871-1968), Grande-Digue ; N.-A. 1893 ; Fitchburg
Clovis D. Girouard (1857), Bouctouche ; N.-A. v 1885 ; Fitchburg
Philias Richard (1858-1932), Grande-Digue ; N.-A. v 1890 ; New Bedford
Siméon Cormier (1874), Bouctouche ; N.-A. v 1895 ; New Bedford
Jude A. Landry (1848), Memramcook ; N.-A. v 1870 ; Lynn
Antoine Boudreau (v 1870), N.-B. ; N.-A. v 1895 ; Lynn
Alphée P. Gautreau (1872), Barachois ; N.-A. v 1895 ; New Bedford
P. Livain Vautour (1864-v 1930), Saint-Louis ; N.-A. v 1890 ; Worcester

ANNEXE II

L'ODYSSÉE DE POLONIE PORELLE, 1815-1914 :

ON FÊTE UNE CENTENAIRE ACADIENNE⁴⁷

Sanford, Maine, 3 sept. 1913

Lundi, le premier septembre, nous étions témoin d'un événement qui se voit rarement parmi les Acadiens de la Nouv. Angleterre.

Mme Pierre Porell, née Polonie Hébert, fille de Joseph Hébert, de Tedish dans la paroisse de Cap Pelé célébrait le centième anniversaire de sa naissance à la résidence de son fils M. Louis Porell⁴⁸. C'est avec un zèle infatigable que depuis trois semaines ses respectables parents travaillent aux préparatifs de ce grand événement.

Le matin de ce grand jour Mme Pierre Porell était debout à 6 heures faisant, presque sans l'aide de personne sa toilette après quoi sur ses deux genoux de cent ans, et chose presque incroyable, avec le même chapelet dont chacun de ses enfants ont appris à dire l'Ave Maria, elle faisait sa prière de matin. Joyeuse elle prend son déjeuner à table avec la famille, elle se lève sans aide et marche jusqu'à la porte où M. Sam Pelletier fait monter sa grand'mère dans son automobile pour se rendre à l'église St. Ignace assister à une grande messe d'action de grâce qui était célébrée pour notre vénérable centenaire. Au delà de 50 membres de cette famille assistait. L'église était rempli, sans doute pour avoir part aux mérites si grands que Jésus répandait en ce jour sur les familles Porell reconnues dans Sanford comme étant si respectables.

Après la messe, la famille et une foule de ses amis se rendaient à la résidence de M. Louis Porell. À partir de 9 heures notre centenaire serrait la main, on ne saurait dire le nombre, mais jusqu'à 11 heures où ses enfants Philippe et Louis demandaient à la foule de se disperser un

47. *L'Évangélène*, 17 septembre 1913, p. 1. L'auteur de ce récit serait Narcisse Cormier (1878-v1940), natif de Cap-Pelé, Collège Saint-Joseph, 1899-1901, aménagé à Sanford, Maine, vers 1903. Un des pionniers de la Société l'Assomption et secrétaire trésorier de la succursale 'Porelle' – probablement en l'honneur de Polonie Porell – par la suite, 'Lauvrière', voir CEA, Fonds Clarence-Cormier, 304, correspondance assidue de Narcisse Cormier avec Clarence Cormier. Dans une lettre qu'il adressa au *Moniteur Acadien*, 3 septembre 1913, Narcisse Cormier avait inclus une photo de la centenaire avec son article à *L'Évangélène*, mais elle ne fut pas publiée.

48. On célébra le centenaire de Polonie Hébert-Porell deux ans avant le temps, puisqu'elle est née à Tidiche le 11 septembre 1815, voir P. Gaudet, « Histoire de la paroisse de Cap-Pelé », présenté par R.-G. LeBlanc, *Sur l'empremier, Société historique de la mer Rouge (SHMR)*, vol. 2, n° 1, 1986, p. 32.

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peu enfin de faire prendre le repos à grand'mère aussi pour se préparer au banquet qui va avoir lieu vers les 4 heures de l'après-midi.

La résidence de M. Louis Porell sur la rue Brook, est entourée de jolies érables et donne sur un côté un parterre de 500 pieds de longueur sur 400 de profondeur⁴⁹. C'est là que trois grandes tables chargées de mets les plus succulents nous attendaient à 4 heures de l'après-midi. Mme Pierre Porell s'avance, soutenue par deux de ses fils, jusqu'à la place d'honneur. Les deux Révérends Pères de la paroisse prennent place chaque côté d'elles et ses enfants sont placés selon l'âge. Ensuite vient les parents qui figurent en très grand nombre. Ma plume est bien trop stérile pour vous dire la gaité qui régnait à table mais il faut aussi dire que dans la joie la plus grande une larme vient toujours mouiller la paupière. C'est d'entendre notre centenaire chanter et aussi nous raconter des petites histoires comiques. Toute joyeuse et d'une voix encore sonore Mme Porell demande à chacun de s'avancer pour prendre un morceau de gâteau en souvenir d'elle. Oui, un joli gâteau de naissance entouré de 100 petits cierges était devant elle et d'une main encore solide elle nous en fait part de chacun un morceau.

Maintenant mes chers lecteurs sans doute vous seriez curieux de savoir un peu le chemin que Mme Pierre Porell a eu à parcourir ; parce que la vie de nos ancêtres n'a pas toujours été passé dans la joie. Mme Pierre Porell est la seule survivante de la famille de Joseph Hébert et de Victoria Cormier. Six sœurs et trois frères sont morts passé l'âge de 80 ans.

À l'âge de 7 ans Polonie devenait orpheline de sa mère ; à 16 ans elle épousait Pierre Porell qui venait s'établir dans le voisinage. Ici ils vivent 20 ans et sept enfants sont nés⁵⁰. M. Pierre Porell pensant faire pour le mieux se décide d'aller prendre une autre terre ; il part en hiver (début de 1849) marchant 600 milles jusqu'à Québec pour prendre un claim 100 milles au nord de Québec (plutôt au sud). Rendu là il bâtit une petite

49. La maison existe toujours en l'année 2001.

50. Sa mère, Victoire LeBlanc est décédée en 1827. En 1833, Polonie, âgée de 18 ans, épousa Pierre Porelle, fils de Jean-François, maître d'école, et de Marie Niles. P. Gaudet, *op. cit.* Pierre Porelle s'établit à Tidiche, où il était propriétaire d'un moulin à bois, qu'il vendit en 1848. R. Brun, « Un Registre de l'état civil des habitants de Franklin Manor, des Champs-Élysées, de Maccan et de Nappan », *SHA*, vol. 2, n° 3, 1966, p. 104-105 ; R. Brun, B. LeBlanc, A. Robichaud, *Les bâtiments anciens de la Mer Rouge*, Michel Henry, éditeur, Shédiac, 1988, p. 43-44, 63 ; P. Gaudet, « Histoire de la paroisse de Cap-Pelé », *SHMR*, *op. cit.*, p. 32.



Polonio Porelle entouré de ses cinq fils, le jour de la fête de son centenaire,
à Sanford, Maine, le 1^{er} septembre 1913. (CEA, coll. Oswald-Porelle)

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cabane pièces sur pièces et au printemps envoie pour sa femme et ses enfants. Prenant ses sept enfants, le plus jeune étant Louis, âgé d'un ans (1848-1941), elle fait le voyage dans une petite goélette prenant 9 jours jusqu'à Québec. De Québec elle fait la distance de 100 milles jusqu'au Lac Aylmer (nord-est de Sherbrooke), la plus grande partie à pied parce que de ce temps un buggy était chose inconnue dans cette partie du pays. Au Lac elle raconte son mari. Et la famille avec le peu de bagage qui était loin du nécessaire, font la traversée du Lac, distance de 3 milles, sur un radeau puis marchent 4 milles jusqu'à la cabane qui n'avait pas de plancher (Stratford). La famille était obligée de coucher sur la terre.

Mme Porell nous donne un compte bien clair de leurs souffrances dans cet endroit. Pour ainsi dire tout leur linge avait été perdu en voyage, ils n'avaient pas le nécessaire pour se protéger contre le froid. Ils étaient même obligés de manger la sève sur les arbres. L'année suivante de leur arrivée le gouvernement leur fournit de la mélasse. Ils passent 11 ans sur cette terre et quatre enfants sont nés rendant la famille à 11. Le père Pierre Porell trouvant un bon prix pour cette terre la vend, et avec sa famille va demeurer à Great Fall, N.H., aujourd'hui Somersworth (v 1862-1863). Au temps qu'éclatait la guerre civile, une autre épreuve pour la mère : son fils Dosithé s'engage dans la compagnie F. neuvième infanterie du New Hampshire. Trois années se passèrent ; après être blessé deux fois Dosithé revient se jeter dans les bras de sa mère qui avait sans doute passé bien des journées à pleurer sur cet enfant qui était dans les feux des batailles⁵¹.

Le temps commençait à se faire dur à Great Fall et M. Pierre Porell se sentait encore l'amour de travailler sur la terre. Il décida d'aller prendre une nouvelle terre à 3 milles d'Island Pond, Vermont (v 1863). Après 4 ans de misères de toutes sortes le souvenir revint du village de leur naissance. Ils s'embarquent pour le Cap-Pelé (v 1867-1868) et une fois chez lui M. Porell se place sur une bonne terre. Après 25 ans de vie paisible le bon Dieu voit son serviteur mûr pour le ciel. Son corps repose dans le cimetière du Cap-Pelé (en 1892).

51. CEA, Dossiers généalogiques, Famille Porelle. Dosithée Porelle est né le 23 septembre 1840. Il est revenu à Cap-Pelé vers 1867-1868, s'est marié en 1873 à Antoinette Roy et est décédé à l'âge de 92 ans ; CEA, F977, Archives de l'archevêché de Québec, N.B. I-89, A. Gagnon à C.F. Cazeau, Shédiac, le 2 juillet 1848 ; R. Brun, B. LeBlanc, A. Robichaud, *op. cit.*, p. 163. La maison de Dosithée Porelle existe toujours ; Y. Léger, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

Mme Porell demeura toujours avec Louis qui, quatre ans après venait à Sanford, Maine (en 1896), et depuis 17 ans la vieille mère n'a jamais manqué de bénir chaque jour les travaux de son cher Louis. Des 11 enfants 3 sont morts. Marie, la plus vieille, épouse de Eugène Beauregard, de Lewiston, Me, décédée en 1883 âgée de 52 ans. Jules décédé au Cap-Pelé à l'âge de 30 ans. Georgina épouse de défunt Thaddé P. Gaudet, autrefois de Barachois, décédée à Sanford âgé de 50 ans. Les enfants vivants sont : Marguerite, veuve de Jacob Labreque, de Montmagny, P.Q., âgée de 80 ans. Philippe, de Sanford âgé de 76 ans, Dosithé du Cap-Pelé, âgé de 73. John, de Sanford, âgé de 68. Louis, de Sanford, âgé de 65. Caroline, épouse d'Isidore Lize, de Rogersville, âgée de 59. Théophile, de Salem, Mass., âgé de 56.

Mme Pierre Porell voit sa sixième génération. Elle compte passé 80 membres de sa famille. Chers compatriotes ne passez jamais par Sanford sans arrêter serrer la main de notre chère grand'mère ; cela vous portera chance.

Nouvelles de la SHA

Léone BOUDREAU-NELSON

LES NOUVEAUX MEMBRES

Nouveaux membres

M. Robert Piart, Paris, France
M. Jean Gaudet, Dieppe (NB)
M. Brad Sweet, Halifax (NÉ)
M. Antonio Bourque, Dieppe (NB)

Membres bienfaiteurs

M. Claude Bourque, Dieppe (NB)
M. Jacques Gascuel, Moncton (NB)

Membre à vie

M^{gr} Ernest Léger, Moncton (NB)

MEMBRES À VIE

Alban Arsenault, Moncton (NB)
Paul-Émile Babineau, Shédiac
Bridge (NB)
John Barbato, Hoboken (NJ), USA
Jean-Judes Basque, Dieppe (NB)
Benoit Boudreau, Moncton (NB)
Ephrem Boudreau, Hull (Qc)
Jean Bourque, Laval (Qc)
Édith Butler, Montréal (Qc)

Anselme Chiasson, Moncton (NB)
Léandre Chiasson, Saint-Basile (NB)
Rémi-J. Chiasson, Antigonish (NÉ)
Denise Clavette, Fredericton (NB)
Luca Codignola, Genova, Italie
Donald Cormier, Moncton (NB)
Léona Cormier, Dieppe (NB)
Roger Cormier, Middletown (NJ)
Yves Cormier, Moncton (NB)

Yvon Cormier, Dieppe (NB)	Gérald LeBlanc, Wedgeport (NÉ)
Michel Cyr, Moncton (NB)	Maurice LeBlanc, Saint-Basile (NB)
Éloi DeGrâce, Edmonton (AB)	Ronald R. LeBlanc, Moncton (NB)
Coral A. d'Entremont, Yarmouth (NÉ)	Ernest Léger, Moncton (NB)
Daniel Deveau, Saint John (NB)	Lauraine Léger, Moncton (NB)
Raoul Dionne, Moncton (NB)	Maurice Léger, Shédiac (NB)
Oscar Duguay, Dieppe (NB)	Michel Léger, Shédiac (NB)
Laurie A. Ébacher, Amesbury (MA) USA	J. Lonhienne, Bonneuil-Matours, France
Gilbert Finn, Dieppe (NB)	Richard MacDonough, Camarillo (CA) USA
Joseph E. Gagnon, Moncton (NB)	Antonine Maillet, Montréal (Qc)
Melvin Gallant, Tracadie (NB)	Rose-Alma Mallet, Boudreau-Ouest (NB)
E. J. Gaudet, Ottawa (On)	Michel Massiera, Moncton (NB)
Christophe Girouard, Sainte-Marie-de-Kent (NB)	Andréa Melanson, Moncton (NB)
Annette Girouard, Sainte-Marie-de-Kent (NB)	Lloyd Melanson, Halifax (NÉ)
Edgar Girouard, Moncton (NB)	René Perron, Sèvres, France
François Granger, Longueil (Qc)	D.O. Robichaud, Moncton (NB)
N.E.S. Griffiths, Ottawa (On)	Évangéline Roy, Moncton (NB)
Raymond Hébert, Rockville (MD) USA	Muriel K. Roy, Moncton (NB)
Louise Imbeault, Moncton (NB)	Ulysse Roy, Québec (Qc)
Bernard Jean, Caraquet (NB)	Léopold Séguin, Québec (Qc)
Roger Lacerte, Lowell (MA) USA	Fidèle Thériault, Southbridge (Mass) USA
Alain Landry, Laval (Qc)	Marcel Trahan, Ville Saint-Laurent (Qc)
Alfred R. Landry, Windham (CT) USA	Pierre Trépanier, Montréal (Qc)

**Assemblée annuelle
de la SHA**

le dimanche 20 mai 2001

13 h

École de Droit, Université de Moncton

Nos deuils

L'Acadie de France vient de perdre deux grandes dames, Monique Hivert-LeFaucheux décédée le 2 janvier 2001 à Roscoff et Anne-Marie LeGac décédée le 24 janvier 2001 à Belle-Île. La communauté acadienne de France et de Belle-Île-en-Mer viennent d'essuyer un dur coup puisque Monique était active au sein de l'Association Belle-Île-Acadie en tant que vice-présidente et également parce que madame LeGac était une des doyennes des Acadiens bellilois.

Monique Hivert-LeFaucheux a été une collaboratrice des *Cahiers*, mais elle a été impliquée de près avec notre société d'histoire dans d'autres circonstances, notamment lors du voyage en France en septembre 1995.



Photo prise à un dîner offert par l'Association Bretagne-Acadie au groupe de la Société historique acadienne à Saint-Malo, le 8 septembre 1995. Nous apercevons au centre Monique Hivert-LeFaucheux en compagnie de révérend Yvon LeBlanc (à gauche) et d'autres adhérents de l'Association Bretagne-Acadie. (coll. Léone Boudreau-Nelson).

Voici dans quels termes nous la décrit un de ses plus proches collaborateurs et de ses plus grands amis, monsieur Gérard-Marc Braud : « C'est une bien triste fin, c'est bien navrant pour une femme comme Monique. Généreuse, très bonne documentaliste et chercheuse, si dévouée à notre cause acadienne... Nous la regrettons sincèrement. C'est aussi une perte précieuse pour les Acadiens qu'elle aimait passionnément »¹.

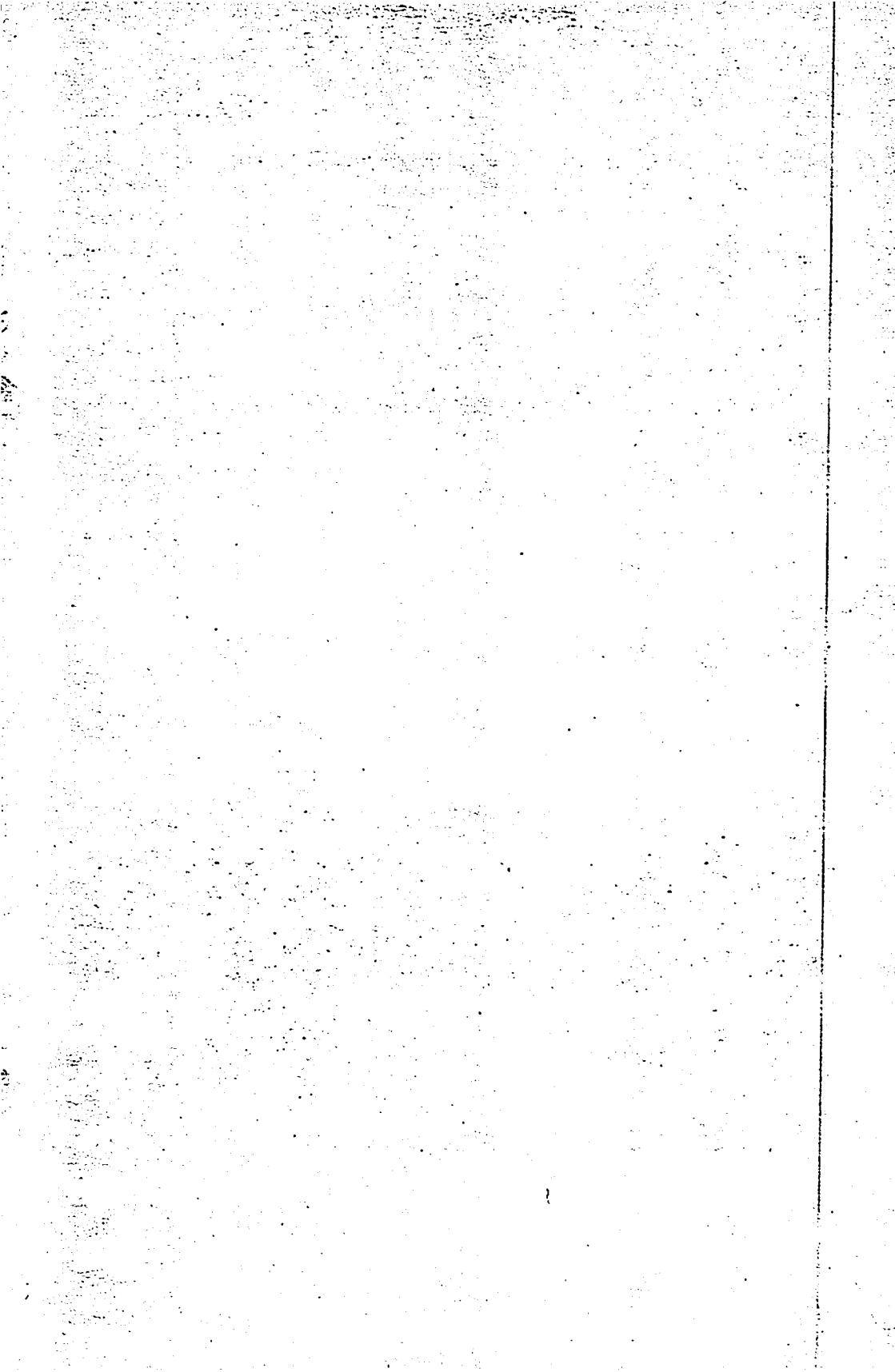
Madame Anne-Marie LeGac était garante de la mémoire collective des Acadiens bellilois. Fière de son ascendance acadienne, elle n'oubliait pas pour autant ses racines belliloises ou bretonnes. Elle n'a pas laissé de traces dans notre revue, mais elle était pourtant bien connue de plusieurs de nos adhérents en raison de l'accueil généreux qu'elle et sa fille Maryvonne leur ont réservé lors de leur passage à Belle-Île.

Maryvonne, à toi ainsi qu'à ta famille, nos plus sincères condoléances en ce moment de tristesse !



Anne-Marie LeGac à gauche, et sa fille Maryvonne à Belle-Île-en-Mer, en juin 1994. (coll. Ronnie-Gilles LeBlanc).

1. Courriel de G.-M. Braud à R.-G. LeBlanc, le 10 janvier 2001.





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