

Le Grand Dérangement 1755–1766

THE ACADIAN EXILE IN MASSACHUSETTS

Beginning in 1755, NEARLY 10,000 FRENCH INHABITANTS OF NOVA SCOTIA, ALSO KNOWN AS THE ACADIANS, HAD THEIR HOMES AND PROPERTY CONFISCATED AND WERE FORCIBLY DEPORTED TO OTHER BRITISH COLONIES IN AMERICA.

Of these, some 2000 found themselves bound for Massachusetts. Destitute and among foreigners of a different religion and language, these Acadian families were distributed among many Massachusetts towns, where they were forced to rely on local residents for basic support.

Having been under British rule since 1713, the Acadians were removed by authorities at the outset of the French and Indian War because of their refusal to take an unqualified oath of allegiance to the British crown. Since they preferred to remain neutral, they were referred to as the “French Neutrals” by British authorities and their Massachusetts “hosts.” This exhibit tells the story of the Acadian experience in Massachusetts, where they were compelled to remain until the end of the war in 1763.

In 1763 many Acadians began to petition the Massachusetts General Court for permission to leave the province, preferring to return to Nova Scotia or relocate to France, St. Domingue (Haiti), or Quebec, areas populated by those who shared their language and religion. Many Acadians eventually made their way to Louisiana. Their descendants today are known as the Cajuns. A few remained in their new homes in Massachusetts.

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The French & British Presence in Acadia

Once encompassing present-day Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, and parts of southern Quebec, Acadia was a region of persistent conflict.



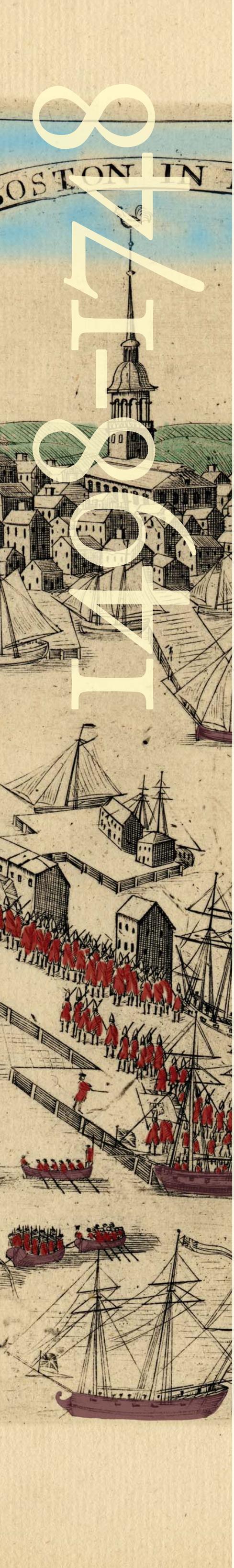
Acadia, or Nova Scotia, as it appeared in 1755
Although its boundaries were contested, they were often stated as running north to the St. Lawrence River and south to Maine.
Massachusetts Archives

Claims by John Cabot for the English in 1498 and Jacques Cartier for the French in 1534 served as the basis for continued struggle over this territory. Possession of the area, primarily settled by the French, shifted regularly, being ceded to the French in the Treaty of Breda (1667) and the English in the Treaty of Utrecht (1713). Although Louisbourg was captured by the English in 1745, it was returned to the French in the Treaty of Aix-La-Chapelle (1748), while the English maintained control of the colony overall, which they called Nova Scotia.

Also, That the said King of Great Britain do likewise restore unto the said Most Christian King, or unto such as to that purpose shall receive his Command duely passed under the Great Seal of France, the Country which is called Acadia, lying in North-America, which the said Most Christian King did formerly enjoy: And to that end the said King of Great Britain shall immediately upon the Ratification of this Agreement, deliver or cause to be delivered unto the said Most Christian King, or such Ministers of his as shall be thereunto appointed, all Instruments and Orders duely dispatched, which shall be necessary to the said Restitution.

—Treaty of Breda, 1667

This treaty guaranteed France dominion over Acadia following the Second Anglo-Dutch War (1665–1667).

A vertical historical illustration on the left side of the page. It depicts a coastal town with a prominent church featuring a dome and a tall steeple. The town is built on a hillside overlooking a harbor filled with numerous sailing ships. In the foreground, a line of soldiers in red uniforms stands on a wooden pier or bridge extending into the water. The background shows a blue sky and a distant horizon. The text 'BOSTON IN' is visible at the top left, and 'NEW BRITISH S' and 'ENGLAND' are partially visible in the background. The illustration is overlaid with a large, stylized white '1713' and a yellow infinity symbol.

The French & British Presence in Acadia

“The most Christian King shall take care to have delivered to the Queen of Great Britain, on the same day that the ratifications of this treaty shall be exchanged, solemn and authentic letters, or instruments, by virtue whereof it shall appear, that the island of St. Christopher’s is to be possessed alone hereafter by British subjects, likewise all Nova Scotia or Acadia, with its ancient boundaries, as also the city of Port Royal, now called Annapolis Royal, and all other things in those parts, which depend on the said lands and islands, together with the dominion, propriety, and possession of the said island, lands, and places, and all right whatsoever, by treaties, or by any other way obtained, which the most Christian King, the crown of France, or any subjects thereof, have hitherto had to the said island, lands, and places, and the inhabitants of the same, are yielded and made over to the Queen of Great Britain, and to her crown for ever, as the most Christian King does at present yield and make over all the particulars abovesaid...”

—Treaty of Utrecht, 1713

The article shown here ceded possession of Acadia or Nova Scotia to Great Britain as a result of Queen Anne’s War (1702–1713). Cape Breton Island, originally part of Acadia, was left to the French.

Prelude to War

The boundaries of Acadia or Nova Scotia had long been at contest, the presence of the French in supposed British territory increasing the apprehension of many.

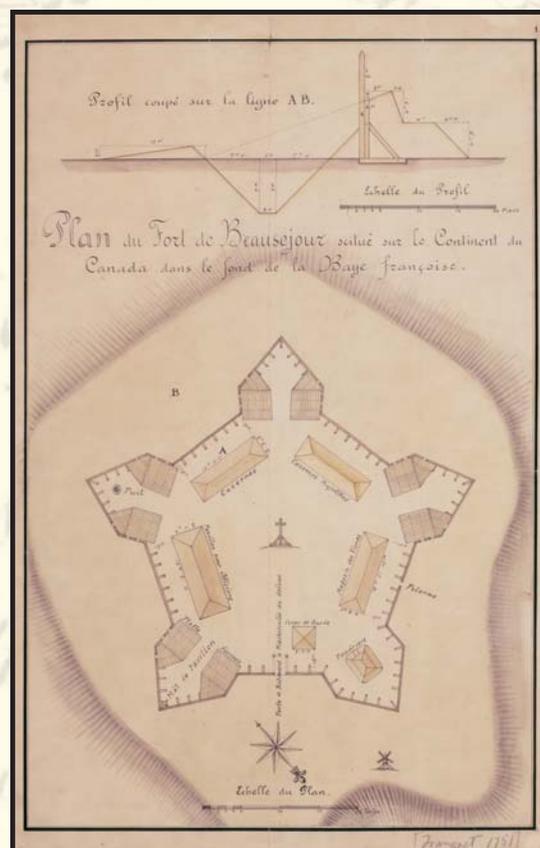
Acadians had remained in the colony following the assumption of British control in 1713. Their refusal to take an unqualified oath of allegiance earned them the title “French Neutrals” and the contempt of British authorities. Massachusetts had always taken an interest in the affairs of Nova Scotia and feared that the French presence there threatened its safety, and perhaps that of all the British North American colonies. Governor William Shirley began voicing such an opinion in 1749.

In 1750 he entered into uneasy negotiations with the French when they established Fort Beausejour on the Chignecto Peninsula. These having proved unsuccessful, Shirley began recruiting forces in 1755 to expel the French from Nova Scotia, appointing Colonel John Winslow as second in command. Troops left Boston Harbor in May. By June, they had captured Fort Beausejour.

War loomed ahead.

Nova Scotia, 1755

This detail, taken from a map of North America, displays the location of Fort Beausejour on the Chignecto Peninsula. The British Fort Lawrence stood across the Missiguash River. Massachusetts Archives



Fort Beausejour, 1755

A similar plan, obtained by the British from a French spy, provided detailed specifications needed for the fort's capture. Courtesy of Library and Archives Canada

The Deportation

On September 5, 1755, John Winslow, under orders from Nova Scotia Governor Charles Lawrence, announced to the Acadians that their homes and property were forfeit to the Crown and that they were to be removed from the colony.



Colonel John Winslow (1703-1774)
Resident of Marshfield, Winslow served as commander to the provincial troops enlisted for the expedition to Nova Scotia. He was instrumental in the capture of Fort Beauséjour and played a major role in the detention and physical removal of the Acadians in the Grand Pré region. Courtesy of the Historic Winslow House Association



Map of North America, 1755
Displayed are the destinations of deported Acadians in 1755 and 1756. Massachusetts Archives

Purportedly to protect British interests in Nova Scotia, Governor Charles Lawrence had decided that the Acadians should be removed and dispersed throughout the American colonies. They were held under guard until hired ships arrived to transport them and what few items they could carry. Their homes and farms were burned to prevent those who escaped from supporting themselves if they remained.

Forced to wait until October, many were in danger of starving. Upon arrival of the ships, the Acadians were herded on board, in many instances being separated from friends and family, despite assurances to the contrary. Initial transports were bound for Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and South Carolina. Later ships delivered Acadians to Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, and Georgia.

All the Coloured part of this Map, with the Inhabitation, of the French therein that are not Coloured, delineates the Rights and possessions of Great Britain, and the various Colours distinguishes his Majesty's several Provinces as their respective Governments at present exercise their Jurisdictions; But the Limits of the Massachusetts Province with New York, Connecticut with New York, New York with New Jersey and Pennsylvania with Maryland are not yet finally determined, owing to some Ambiguity in the description of the Territory of several Grants and to the debates and expenses upon such disputes are always attended with. The uncoloured part of this Map to the Northward of the Gulf-River of St. Lawrence is all the Territory France has any just right to in N^o America to the Northward of 33 Degrees of N^o Latitude. And the rest of the uncoloured part to the Southward of South Carolina is all that belongs to Spain according to Stipulation between Gr^o Britain and Spain in 1763.

*British Statute Miles 69 to 0
English & French Sea Leagues 100
5 10 15 20 30 40*

The Deportation



Grand Pré September the 15th 1755

The Names of the French Inhabitants belonging to Grand Pré, Acadians, who were confined in the Barracks on the 15th of September 1755

Name	Village	Sex	Age	Profession	Wife	Children	Tools	Wagon	Wheeled	Wheeled	Wheeled	Wheeled
Jean Baptiste Boudreau	St. Charles	M	40	Farmer	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
Antoine Boudreau	St. Charles	M	35	Farmer	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
Charles Boudreau	St. Charles	M	30	Farmer	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
Joseph Boudreau	St. Charles	M	25	Farmer	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
...

1755

15

...

Memorandum for Capt. Murray, 1755
 This is a transcript of a letter from Nova Scotia Governor Charles Lawrence to Captain Alexander Murray directing him to "take an eye for an eye... in short a life for a life" in cases where Acadians molested the troops or caused "mischief" while awaiting deportation.
 Courtesy of the Massachusetts Historical Society

List of Acadians confined by Col. John Winslow, September 15, 1755
 Following the deportation order, Acadian men were confined to prevent their escape. This detailed list enumerates each man's family size and livestock holdings as well as listing his home village.
 Courtesy of the Massachusetts Historical Society

October 8th – began to Embarke the Inhabitants who went verry solentarily and Unwillingly. the women in Great Distress Carrying Their Children In their arms. Other[s], Carrying their Decept parents in their Cartes and all their Goods in Great Confusion & appeared a scen of woe & Distres.

—Journal of John Winslow.
 Courtesy of the Massachusetts Historical Society

1755

September the 15th This Morning sent for Leat. Boudreau and Dela... a Citation to the Inhabitants, with a strict Charge to be... a Fine Day and the Inhabitants very busy about their...
 September 15th This Morning had returned of the Horns of the several Company and ordered such as had them to deliver up what Carriages they had to complement those who had no Horns, which were about 200...
 18th There in the afternoon the French Inhabitant appear...
 Gentleman I have Received from his Excellency...
 The Port of Duty I am now upon is what the...
 But it is not my Business to Announce...
 That your Lands & Instruments Cattle of all kinds and...
 Thus it is presently his Majesty's order that the...
 your Money and Household Goods, as many as you can...
 Powers that all these Goods be sent to you and that you are...

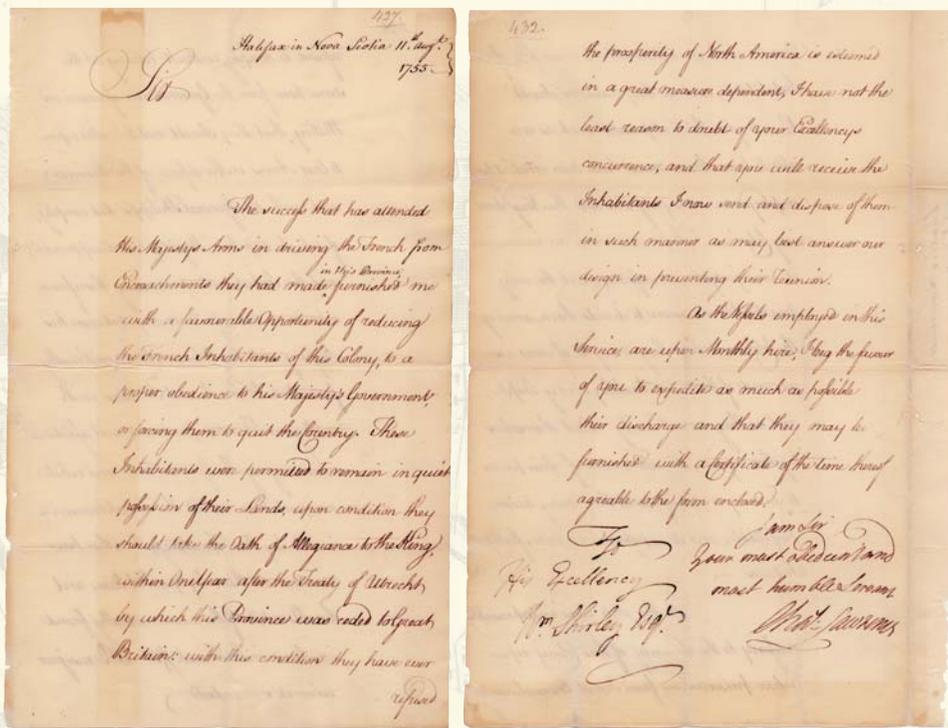


Eighteenth-Century Ships
 Taken from a contemporary map of Bermuda, these images depict two distinct styles of ships that were used to transport the Acadians to the American colonies. Generally mercantile in nature, they are (top & bottom) a snow and a sloop.
 Courtesy of the Hart Nautical Collection, MIT

Proclamation read at the church at Grand Pré, September 5, 1755
 Although required to announce to the Acadians plans for their deportation, John Winslow found it "very disagreeable to [his] natural make & temper."
 Courtesy of the Massachusetts Historical Society

Exiles in Massachusetts

In November 1755, the first ships packed with Acadians arrived in Boston Harbor.



Letter from Governor Charles Lawrence of Nova Scotia, August 11, 1755. Addressed to Governor Shirley of Massachusetts, it is similar to those sent to the governors of the American colonies to which the Acadians were deported, detailing the danger they posed to the security of Nova Scotia and the necessity of internment in the receiving colony. Massachusetts Archives

Although the vessels were bound elsewhere, poor conditions on board prompted investigation by a joint committee of the Massachusetts General Court. A number of passengers were allowed to disembark. They were soon followed by nearly 2000 others for whom Massachusetts would be their final destination.

Having arrived destitute, the Acadians' appearance prompted action by the provincial legislature to provide for their support. As they were dispersed among various towns, the overseers of the poor and selectmen were directed to provide for them at the province's expense. Further legislation was passed when it became apparent that the Acadians' stay would be extended. Legislators attempted to secure assurances of reimbursement from the government of Nova Scotia, but to little avail.

Being both French and Roman Catholic, the Acadians were not especially welcome in their new setting. Many townspeople feared they would escape or seek retribution under cover of darkness. Others simply balked at the expense of their support. There were some, though, who took pity on them and assisted them during their sojourn.

Exiles in Massachusetts

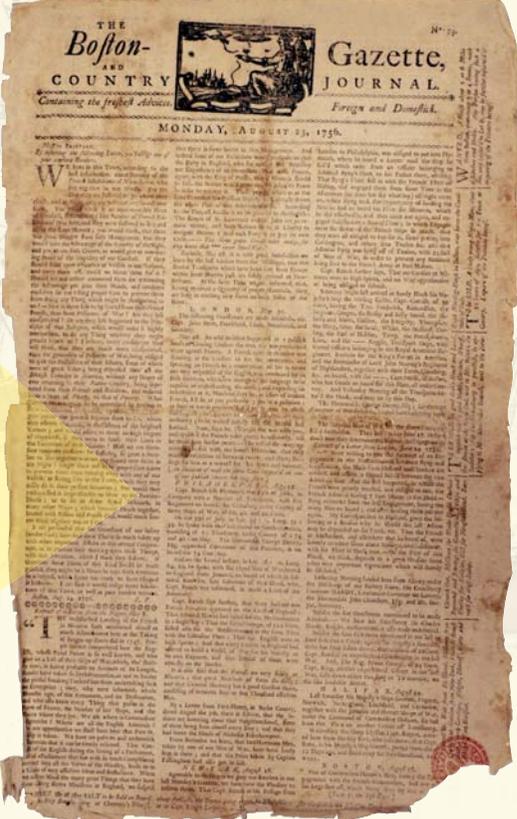


Name	Age	Sex	Place of Birth	Time of Arrival	Health
John ...	40	Male	England	14 days	well
John ...	37	Male	England	14 days	well
John ...	35	Male	England	14 days	well
John ...	33	Male	England	14 days	well
John ...	31	Male	England	14 days	well
John ...	29	Male	England	14 days	well
John ...	27	Male	England	14 days	well
John ...	25	Male	England	14 days	well
John ...	23	Male	England	14 days	well
John ...	21	Male	England	14 days	well
John ...	19	Male	England	14 days	well
John ...	17	Male	England	14 days	well
John ...	15	Male	England	14 days	well
John ...	13	Male	England	14 days	well
John ...	11	Male	England	14 days	well
John ...	9	Male	England	14 days	well
John ...	7	Male	England	14 days	well
John ...	5	Male	England	14 days	well
John ...	3	Male	England	14 days	well
John ...	1	Male	England	14 days	well

1755. The ... in general are in good health. The ... of ... is ...

General Court Committee Report, 1755
The intent of this report was to reveal conditions on board the first series of transports laden with Acadians and bound for Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania. Massachusetts Archives

M
The ... of ... is ...



Boston Gazette, 1756
Bostonians were wary of their Acadian prisoners. The author of this letter feared their escape in stolen ships under cover of darkness or worse, their destruction of the town or powder house, "beated with Passion and Popish Zeal." Courtesy of the Trustees of the Boston Public Library

Massachusetts General Court Acts 1755-1756, Chapter 35
The law required towns to provide Acadian exiles with houses and working tools and with general care in cases of necessity, to be reimbursed by the province. It also instructed the towns to provide them employment and authorized their indenture. Massachusetts Archives

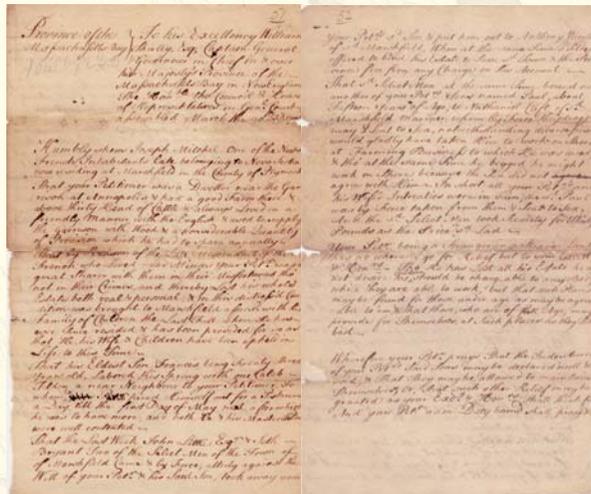


Thomas Hutchinson (1711-1780), portrait by Walter Gilman Page, 1900
As a member of Council and later Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts, Hutchinson acted as a friend to the exiled Acadians, making attempts to keep families together that were threatened with separation and writing petitions for several illiterate Acadians wishing to address the General Court. Courtesy of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Art Commission

A Case Study: Marshfield and the Acadians

As was the case with many Massachusetts towns,
Marshfield began to receive Acadians in the fall of 1755.

As the influx of Acadians into the province grew, the legislature was forced to find places to accommodate the new visitors. Among those arriving in Marshfield was the Michel family, consisting of seven members. A later arrival, the Meuse family, although unassigned to the town by the legislature, was permitted to reside in the town in order to provide for its own support.



Petition of Joseph Michel, March 30, 1756

Unlike the Meuse family, which willingly entered into an indenture, Joseph Michel's eldest sons were forcibly indentured by two of the selectmen of Marshfield. Unhappy with this turn of events, Michel sought intervention from the General Court, arguing that since the boys had found their own employment the contract should be considered null and void. Massachusetts Archives

The Michel Family

Originally farmers from the area of Annapolis Royal, the Michels claimed to have been friends of the English in Nova Scotia, having provided wood and provisions to the nearby garrison. They arrived in Marshfield in the fall of 1755. Placed in a local schoolhouse, likely because of a lack of available housing, they were provided for by the selectmen of the town.

Only several months after their arrival in the town, the Michels received a visit from the selectmen, advising them that their two eldest sons had been indentured-- Francis, 23, to local farmer Anthony Winslow and Paul, 15, to mariner Nathaniel Clift. Both the family and neighbor Caleb Tilden voiced their disapproval of the indenture, but to no avail. In response, the boys' father, Joseph Michel, petitioned the General Court.

With the exception of the two eldest sons, who were relocated to Plymouth in 1760, the majority of the family remained in Marshfield, Joseph Michel dying there in 1763. The rest of the family continued on and it is likely that they integrated themselves into town life.



General Court Committee Report, April 26, 1756

In response to the petition of Joseph Michel, a joint committee was appointed to investigate. Its advice, approved by the legislature, declared that forced indenture was contrary to legislative intent in cases where Acadians were willing to work and were not agreeable to indenture. Massachusetts Archives

A Case Study: Marshfield and the Acadians

The Meuse Family

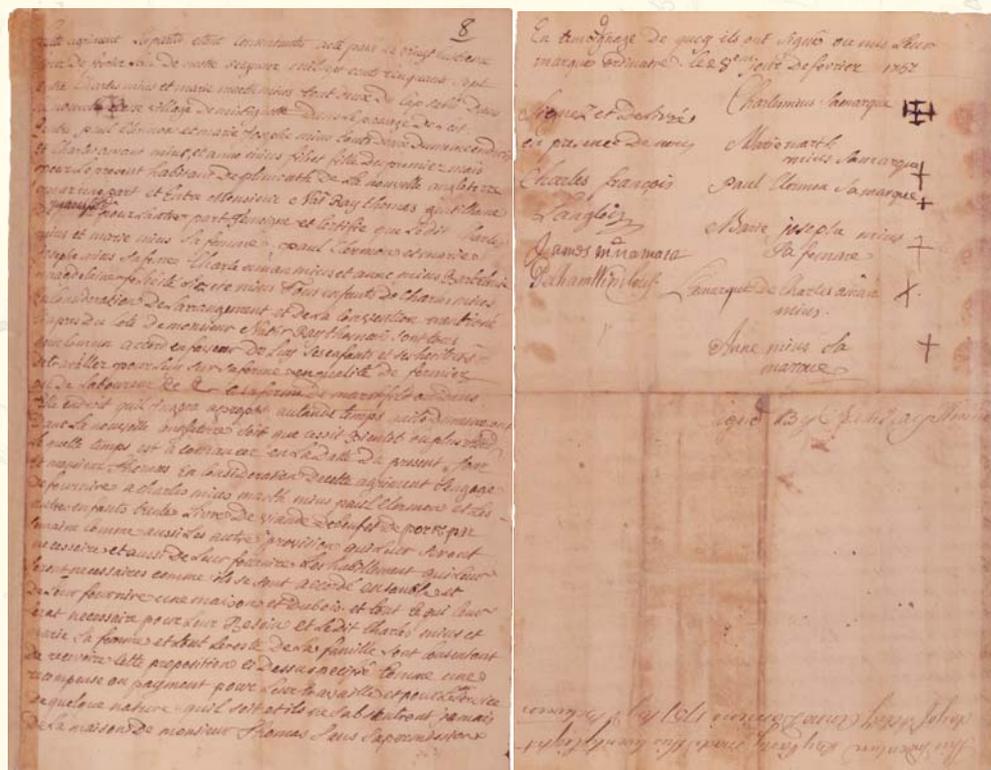
Hailing from Cape Sable, the Meuse family arrived in Massachusetts sometime between the summer and fall of 1756. Residing in Plymouth, the Meuses provided for their own support, yet when this became difficult they petitioned the General Court, complaining that they were not being provided for by the town as were other Acadians.

The response of the General Court was to assign them to the town of Wareham, but while waiting for its answer the Meuses contracted with Nathaniel Ray Thomas of Marshfield in order to provide for their support. Permission was given for them to remain in Marshfield.



Nathaniel Ray Thomas
A wealthy inhabitant of Marshfield, Thomas entered into a contract with Acadians Charles Meuse, his son-in-law Paul Clement, and their families.
Courtesy of the Marshfield Historical Commission

Complaining of mistreatment by Thomas, the family's indenture was cancelled and the entire family was moved to Easton. Unable to support themselves, several of the sons left the town to seek employment while Charles Meuse, father of the family, complained again of a lack of support by town officials. Unhappy with Massachusetts life, the Meuses requested permission to go to France and, later, Quebec. It is assumed that they eventually left the province.

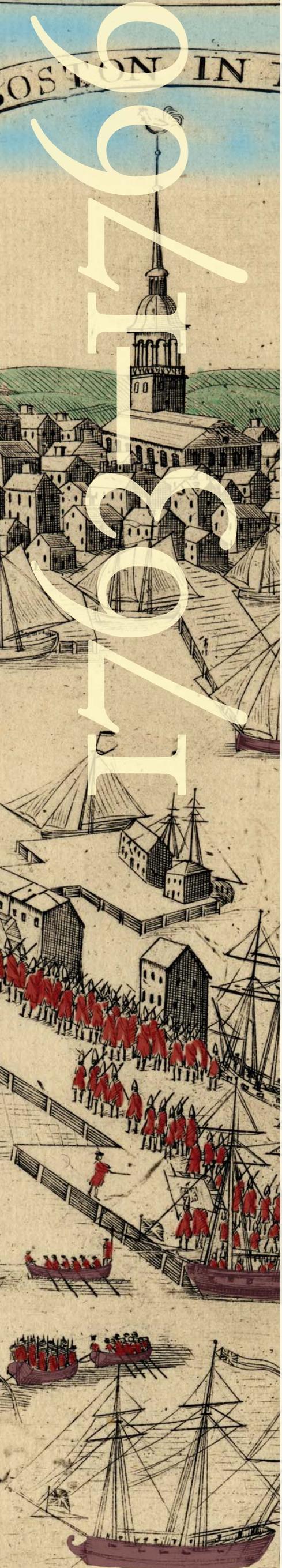


Meuse Family Indenture, February 28, 1757
Written in French, this document served as the Meuse family's contract with Nathaniel Ray Thomas. In exchange for laboring on his farm, Thomas agreed to provide them with housing, food, and clothing.
Massachusetts Archives

Attempts at Relocation

With the end of the war and the signing of the Treaty of Paris (1763), the Acadians in Massachusetts began to signify their desire to leave.

Petitions, some with over one thousand names, were submitted by Acadians to the General Court of Massachusetts beginning in 1763. Many sought to depart the province and settle in other regions, among them France, St. Domingue (present-day Haiti), and Quebec. Having been prevented from migrating to French colonies, Acadians left the province not in a large-scale movement but in small, isolated groups. Some few, it would appear, remained in Massachusetts.



A list of the french who desire to go to old France

Sorte of families	Men	Boys	W.C.
Stevie & Madeline	3	3	8
Magloir & Marie	3	2	7
Jean Louis & Marie	1		3
Joseph & Marie	1		3
Paul & Marie	3	5	10
Jean Louis & Marie	2	2	6
Jacques & Marie	5	1	8
Benoni & Marie	4	1	7
Claude & Marie	2	1	5
Jean Melançon & Marie	1		3
Joseph & Marie	2	2	6
Jean & Marie	2	1	5
Francis & Marie	1		2
Goldhaber & Marie	4	2	8
Benoni & Marie	1		3
Marie & Marie	2	2	6
Jacques & Marie	1	1	3
Stevie & Marie	2	2	7
Jacques & Marie	1	2	5
Joseph & Marie	2	2	6
William & Marie	1	1	4
Jean & Marie	1	2	5
de la Pierre & Marie	2	3	6
Benoni & Marie	2	3	6
Jean & Marie	5	2	9
Amos & Marie	2	3	7
Total	52	34	118

Paul & Marie	4	4	8
Bene Landry	3		4
Benon & Marie	1	4	7
Paul & Marie	1	4	6
de la Pierre & Marie	3	2	5
de la Pierre & Marie	3	3	6
Joseph & Marie	2	2	6
de la Pierre & Marie	1		3
Charles & Marie	2	2	6
Julien & Marie	2	1	5
Paul & Marie	2	1	5
Jean & Marie	4	4	11
Benon & Marie	2	2	6
Claude & Marie	3	2	7
Benon & Marie	1		3
Joseph & Marie	3	3	9
Benon & Marie	1		3
Charles & Marie	2		4
de la Pierre & Marie	3	1	7
Joseph & Marie	1	2	5
Francis & Marie	5	5	14
Jean & Marie	2	2	6
Charles & Marie	1		3
Jacques & Marie	1	2	4
Benon & Marie	3	4	11
Josiah & Marie	4	4	14
Charles & Marie	3	2	7
Francis & Marie	2	3	7
Jean & Marie	1		3
Dominique & Marie	1	1	3
Total	52	44	119

Acadian Petitions, 1763-1766
Petitions submitted to the General Court contain the names of heads of families and number of family members of Acadians wishing to leave the colony and go to France (above) or Quebec (below). The name of the Charles Meuse family appears on both petitions, although the family had been reduced by half, having separated in order to provide for their own support.
Massachusetts Archives

Charles Meuse, Pierre Bernard

Notre situation estant extrêmement pauvre et sans espoir de nous en tirer par quelque moyen que ce soit nous nous sommes adressés à votre Honneur pour nous faire passer en France ou en d'autres lieux où nous pourrions subsister.

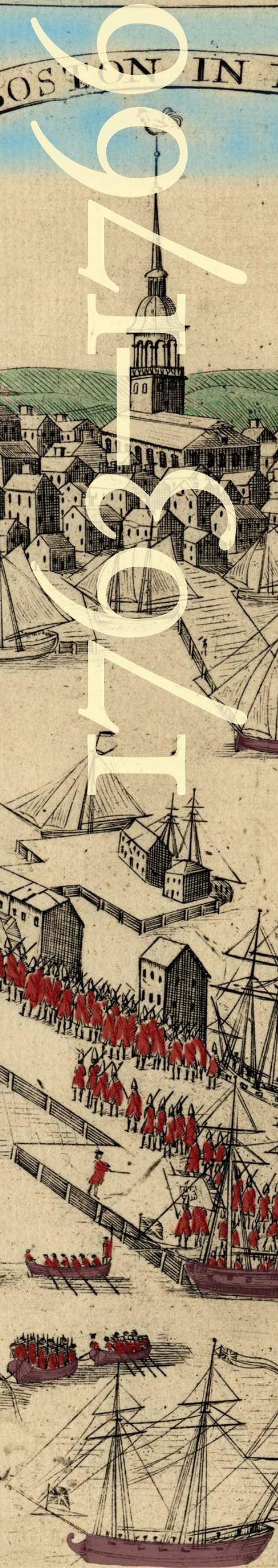
Cher Monsieur

Vous sçavez les malheurs qui nous arrivent en ce moment et les besoins que nous avons de votre assistance. Nous sommes réduits à la dernière extrémité et nous sommes obligés de vous en supplier.

Je suis, Monsieur, votre très humble et très fidèle serviteur.

Joseph Meuse	17	Desa famille
grande veuve	7	Desa famille
Charles Meuse	6	Desa famille
parois le blanc	4	Desa famille
parois Landry	7	Desa famille
Marguerite Landry	Desa famille	
a malheurs	2	Desa famille
Charles Meuse	6	Desa famille
pelle Claude Meuse	7	Desa famille
gulliers Meuse	4	Desa famille
gambier Meuse	10	Desa famille
Charles Meuse	8	Desa famille
Joseph Landry	10	Desa famille
pelle Landry	6	Desa famille
parois Landry	6	Desa famille
Joseph Landry	6	Desa famille
Josiah Landry	6	Desa famille
Michel Landry	2	Desa famille
gambier Meuse	9	Desa famille
Joseph Meuse	8	Desa famille
parois Meuse	8	Desa famille
Jean Louis Meuse	13	Desa famille
Josiah Meuse	12	Desa famille
Pierre Meuse	2	Desa famille

Attempts at Relocation



Gentlemen of the House of Representatives

At the beginning of this Session I sent a Message to you recommending a petition of some french Acadians, to which I have received an Answer. I now recommend to you another petition of the Acadians in general, which I desire you would immediately take into your consideration.

Ever since I have been Governor of this Province I have had great compassion for this people, as every one must who has considered that it was by the exigencies of War rather than any fault of their own, that they were removed from a State of ease and affluence & brought into poverty & dependence from which in their present situation they can see no prospect of being delivered. I have hitherto made several attempts to get them settled in some manner that might make them useful Subjects of Great Britain & comfortable to themselves: but I have failed for want of ability.

Address of Governor Bernard to the House of Representatives, February 13, 1766

Forwarding several Acadian petitions to the House of Representatives, Governor Bernard advised that permission be granted and funds allowed for the transport of Acadians to Quebec, believing them to be industrious British subjects, temporarily disadvantaged by circumstance. Massachusetts Archives

You have now an Opportunity at so great Expence to dispose of these people so that, instead of being a burden to the Province & to themselves, as they are like to continue whilst they remain here, they may become a great Acquisition of Wealth & Strength to the British Empire in America: as It is certain that their industry only waits for property to exert itself upon, without which no One will be industrious. I therefore hope you will improve this Occasion; and in so doing, you will unite public Spirit with Charity.

Vra. Bernard

Council chamber
Feb. 10. 1766

May it please your Excellency,

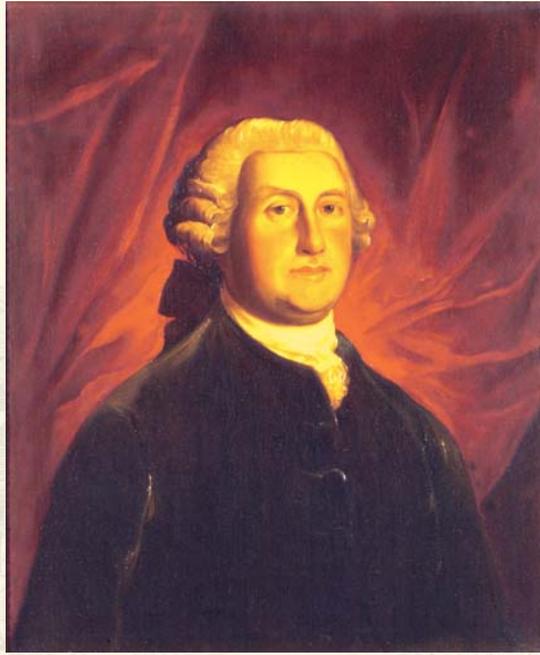
THE House have duly attended to your Excellency's Message of the 9th Instant, relative to the French Acadians, and by Governor MURRAY's Letter accompanying the same we find he is ready to receive them; but your Excellency is pleased to inform us that Gov. MURRAY has signified to you his inability for want of a proper Fund to make any Provision for them upon their arrival there.

As this Province has been at great Expence in supporting them here, and have taken other Measures to render them comfortable. The House can't think it prudent at this Time that this Government should be at any further Expence concerning them.

Message of the House of Representatives to Governor Bernard, June 26, 1766

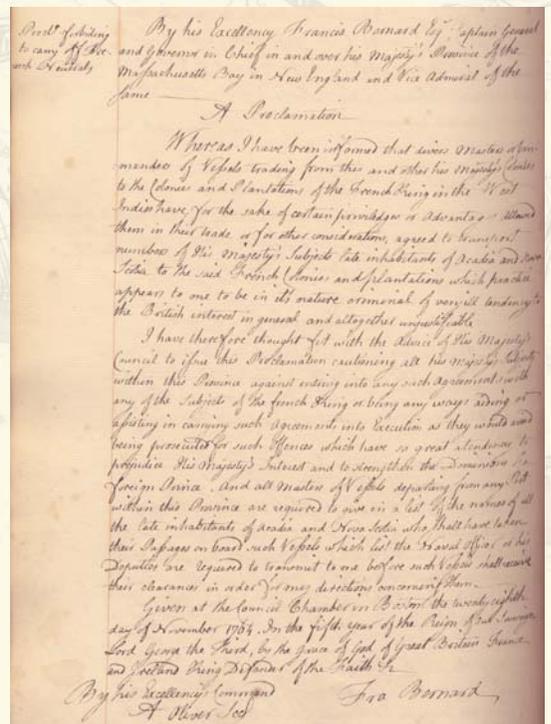
After consideration of additional requests by the Acadians for support during their proposed attempts at resettlement in Quebec, the House of Representatives denied them further aid. As a result, Acadians left for Quebec in small groups. Massachusetts Archives

Attempts at Relocation



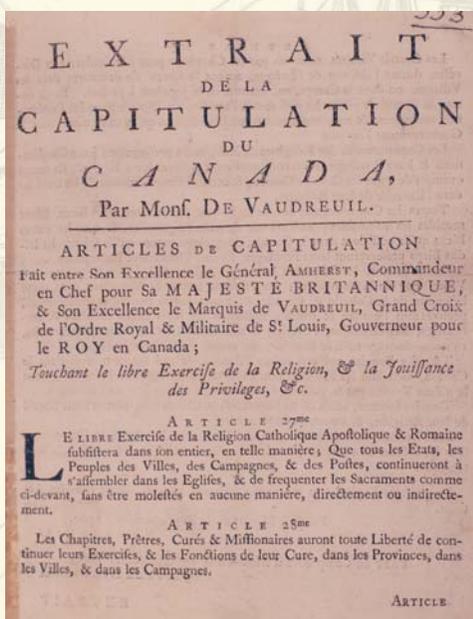
Francis Bernard, Governor of Massachusetts (1760-1769), portrait by Giovanni Battista Troccoli, 1925

Following the signing of the Treaty of Paris (1763), Governor Bernard found himself having to deal with the matter of the Acadians wishing to leave the province and return home, settle in the French colonies, or settle in the newly-established British colony of Quebec. Courtesy of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Art Commission



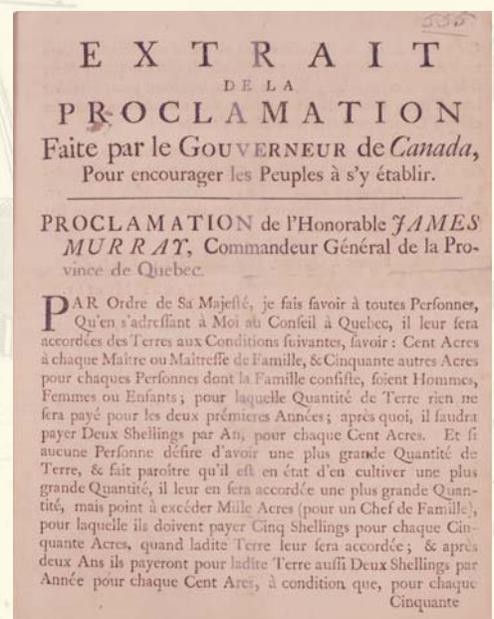
Proclamation of Governor Francis Bernard, November 28, 1764

Faced with the requests of nearly one thousand Acadians and their attempts to relocate to the French colony of St. Domingue (Haiti), Governor Bernard found it necessary to issue this proclamation forbidding their transport, claiming that it would tend to "strengthen the dominion of a foreign prince." Massachusetts Archives



Circular containing the Articles of Capitulation and the Proclamation of Governor James Murray, 1766

This circular, published in French, details several articles agreed upon by French governor Pierre de Rigaud upon the surrender of Quebec, guaranteeing former French subjects freedom to practice the Roman Catholic faith. Newly appointed British governor James Murray promised land to persons of French origin wishing to settle in Quebec, a very appealing proposal to displaced Acadians. Massachusetts Archives



Evangeline & Historic Memory

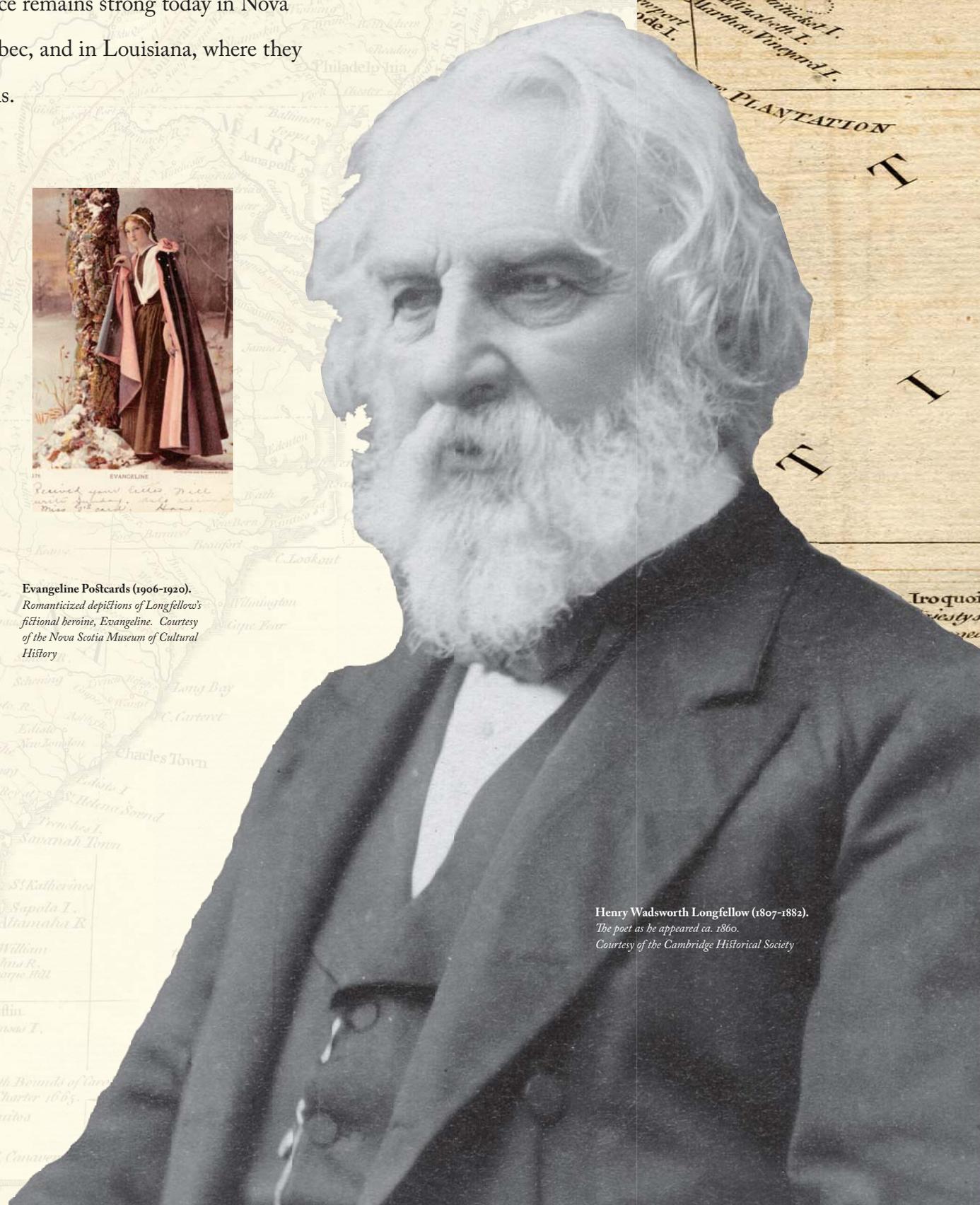
In 1847, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow published his poem *Evangeline: A Tale of Acadie*, a fictional tale of Evangeline and Gabriel, lovers separated during the Acadian deportation.

During a conversation at his home with Nathaniel Hawthorne and the Reverend Horace Connolly in 1840 or 1841, Longfellow heard the legend of two betrothed lovers separated during the Acadian expulsion. Intrigued by the tale, he went on to read Thomas Chandler Haliburton's *History of Nova Scotia*, and in 1845 began work on the poem.

Although fictional and historically inaccurate in many respects, it has served as the only glimpse of the historic event for several generations of readers. The character Evangeline herself has become representative of the Acadian removal and subsequent dispersal. An Acadian presence remains strong today in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, and in Louisiana, where they have become known as Cajuns.



Evangeline Postcards (1906-1920).
Romanticized depictions of Longfellow's fictional heroine, Evangeline. Courtesy of the Nova Scotia Museum of Cultural History



Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882).
The poet as he appeared ca. 1860. Courtesy of the Cambridge Historical Society



Evangeline & Historic Memory



Statue of Evangeline, St. Martinville, Louisiana

A gift to the town from Delores Del Rio, star of the 1929 film adaptation of Longfellow's poem, this statue serves to memorialize the Acadian deportation and the later settlement of many Acadians in Louisiana. Courtesy of the Louisiana Office of Tourism

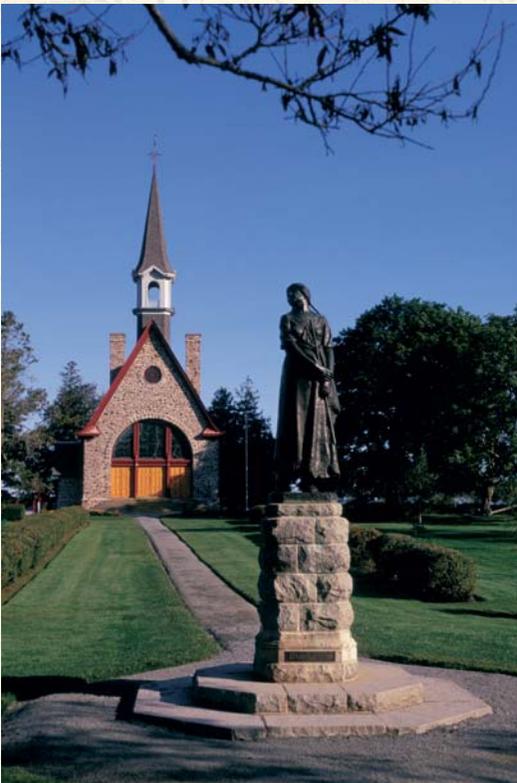


Evangeline Oak, St. Martinville, Louisiana

Emmeline Labiche and Louis Arceneaux, the "true" Evangeline and Gabriel (from a reinvention of Longfellow's poem by Felix Voorbies), are supposed to have met under this tree after their long separation. Under either pair of names, this entirely fictional couple, continues to symbolize the Acadian triumph over adversity resulting in their strong presence in Louisiana today as Cajuns. Courtesy of the Louisiana Office of Tourism

"Many a weary year had passed since the burning of Grand-Pré, When on the falling tide the freighted vessels departed, Bearing a nation, with all its household gods, into exile, Exile without an end, and without an example in story. Far asunder, on separate coasts, the Acadians landed; Scattered they were, like flakes of snow, when the wind from the northeast Strikes aslant through fogs that darken the Banks of Newfoundland."

Evangeline: A Tale of Acadie
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow



Statue of Evangeline, Grand Pré National Historic Site, Nova Scotia

Standing outside the church at Grand Pré, the entire site stands as a memorial to the Acadian deportation of 1755. Courtesy of Nova Scotia Tourism, Culture and Heritage

All the Coloured part of this Map, with the Encompassed of the French and not Coloured, delineates the Rights and possessions of most of the various Colonies distinguished by several Provinces and respective Governments at present exercise their Jurisdictions; But the Massachusetts Province with New York, Connecticut with New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania with Maryland are not yet finally determined to some Ambiguity in the description of the Territory of New Jersey to the tedious and expensive progress such disputes are always attended with. The uncoloured part of this Map is the Northern part of the Territory of Louisiana, which is all the Territories France has any just right to in North America Northward of 29 Degrees of N^o Latitude. And the rest of the uncoloured part to the Southward of South Carolina, is all that belongs to Spain according to Stipulation between Great Britain and Spain, in 1763.

