Chasing Evangeline: How Archaeology and Heritage Shaped the Grand-Pré National Historic Site

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Abstract

This thesis examines how the relationship between archaeology and heritage impacts a historic site, using the Grand-Pré National Historic Site (GPNHS) as a case study. Particularly, looking into whether this relationship has been dominated by the heritage narratives or if new archaeological data has been incorporated into site official site interpretation. Situated where the Acadian village of the same name was located, GPNHS has a history of archaeology and tourism predating Parks Canada's historic site designation in 1982. Early narratives focused on the poetic Acadia of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's *Evangeline*, with artifacts and features being labelled in accordance with the titular heroine's fictional village. Longfellow's Acadia later fell out of favour, though a romanticized history of Grand-Pré continued to dominate the narratives. Using archival tourist publications, archaeological reports, and Parks Canada management documents, I trace the change of heritage narratives at GPNHS from the 19 century until present. Through these I illustrate how narratives of Grand-Pré's heritage have come to be, their solidification into the public memory, and the changes that have been made through modern archaeological data. There has been a history of romantic idealization at GPNHS, with Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem *Evangeline* sparking images of romantic Acadian landscapes and excavations from the later 19 century appealing to tourists seeking to escape modernity. This research suggests that heritage dominates the interpretative narratives at GPNHS, with new archaeological data slowly incorporated in favor of pre-established information.

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Introduction

There is a stubbornness to heritage stories that flummoxes scholars. The distance between myth and truth or between heritage and history sometimes appears to be unbridgeable.

-Little and Shackel, *Archaeology, Heritage, and Civic Engagement*

Currently there are two stories being told at the Grand-Pré National Historic Site (GPNHS). The first is that of the memorial church, built atop the foundations of the original parish church. The foundation was first excavated during the nineteenth century, along with a second foundation and coffins nearby. The memorial church was built by Acadians descended from those who had been deported in 1755 and came to be a central feature of the site. Presently, it contains paintings depicting the stages of the Acadian period, from their lives as peaceful farmers, the tragedy of the Deportation, and their eventual migration back to the Maritimes. These images, and the overall presentation of GPNHS, romanticize Acadian history in the legacy of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's *Evangeline: A Tale of Acadie*. The second story is the search for the true location of the parish church, Saint-Charles-des-Mines. Since 2001, Parks Canada and Saint Mary's University have worked together on the long-term project of searching for the buried remains of the parish church. Recently, a potential location of the parish church has been found using geophysical techniques and limited excavations. The relationship between these stories has shaped how GPNHS has developed through history and continues to influence how the site is operated.

The relationship between archaeology and heritage is closely connected. Archaeology has been utilized in the creation and substantiation of heritage narratives, especially when archaeological data fits into the context of the heritage. Conversely, archaeology has been guided

by the heritage narratives which have created significance at sites. The Parthenon in Athens, remembered as a pagan temple and symbol of Western democracy, has its history as a Christian church and Muslim Mosque largely unremembered (Beard 2003, 68). Presently, the appearance of the Parthenon is linked to the fifth century BCE, with later history stripped away by nineteenth century archaeologists in a deliberate campaign to restore physical aspects of classical Greece (Beard 2003, 106). This choice to present only the classical period of the Parthenon results not only from the heritage narrative of classical Athens as the birthplace of modern Western democracy, but also from the deliberate downplay of select periods of Greek history. Official heritage discourse often has a limited perspective regarding how politics, national and international, intersect with expressions of heritage (Atakuman 2020, 242). Thus, the heritage narrative of a given site can be read as having apolitical origins, while the covert motivations by those making decisions for what is remembered go unnoticed by wider audiences.

Heritage, and heritage narratives, can be a complicated term. Here, a heritage narrative is defined as the stories the public use to understand history, and which is presented at a site as the primary means of interpretation for a visitor. Interpretation is used here as the way that archaeology, along with history and heritage, is the explanation of the past using known information. Heritage differs from archaeology and history through its connection to memory, creating a product of our collective understanding of the present which appeals to a less critical public. (Lowenthal 2015, 69, 398). This is to say, history becomes heritage through collective memories of people and events. Heritage works as a tool in how we organize public history, with archaeological data making heritage knowable in physical reality (Smith and Shackel 2014, 47; Smith and Waterton 2009, 42). To explore the relationship of archaeology and heritage at a historic site, this thesis will examine the development of GPNHS.

GPNHS is situated between Hortonville and Wolfville, Nova Scotia, and was part of the wider Acadian region of Les Mines. The first Acadian settlers to Les Mines came from the Port Royal settlement in the 1680s, with this Les Mines coming to rival its parent colony by the turn of the century (Coleman 1968, 2). Like other marshland Acadian settlements, farmers at Grand-Pré dyked the salt marshes rather than concentrate on clearing upland forests (Coleman 1968, 4). Despite the peaceful characterization of the Acadians, conflict between the British and French led to Acadian involvement such as with the Battle of Grand-Pré. The colony would also change hands between the two European countries until 1710, when the British took permanent control of Nova Scotia (Coleman 1968, 32). Acadia, and Grand-Pré, prospered throughout the changes in ownership and colonial conflicts that arose between the British and the French, maintaining their neutral stance in colonial military actions and relatively peaceful existence until 1755.

Beginning in 1755, the British began deporting Acadians from the colony which is an event that is known as the Acadian Deportation. Colonel John Winslow was tasked with overseeing the Deportation at Grand-Pré, where he used the parish church as part of his encampment (LeBlanc 2003, 36). On the 5 of September Winslow began his plan by arresting the men of the community within the parish church. When the Deportation was finished, approximately 2,200 Acadians were deported from Grand-Pré with their homes and buildings destroyed (LeBlanc 2003, 44-46). The Acadian community found themselves exiled from their homeland, with many wandering in the years immediately following the Deportation. A large population of Acadians eventually settled in Louisiana, and though some returned to Nova Scotia following the 1760s it would not be to the fertile land they had left (LeBlanc 2003, 48). Five years following the Deportation, New England settlers were brought to populate the now vacant colony, with the site of the present day GPNHS used as a plough field (Dunn 1982, 3). It was not until the publication

of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's *Evangeline* in 1847, increased interest in tourism, and treasure hunting that the site would begin to develop into a historic site, with Parks Canada acquiring the site in 1957.

This thesis, using a case study of the Grand-Pré National Historic Site, seeks to answer the question of how the relationship between archaeology and heritage have evolved at a specific historic site. A primary focus of this research looks at whether this relationship has been reciprocal in nature, or one-sided in favour of pre-existing heritage narratives. To answer this question this thesis features an analysis of how GPNHS developed since the late nineteenth century through to present day. Archival data, in the form of tourism publications, document the first one hundred and fifty years of tourism to the site. The nineteenth century publications also serve to document the antiquarian archaeologists' activities, as there are no primary accounts from the individuals themselves. Archaeological reports from the later twentieth century by Parks Canada archaeologists are used to contextualize what excavations took place during this time. Reports from the partnership between Saint Mary's archaeologists and Parks Canada since 2001 were consulted for modern data. The Parks Canada 2012 site management plan for GPNHS detail what Parks Canada's plans are for incorporating archaeological data into the historic site, making it a key source of information (Parks Canada 2012, 26). This document also illustrates how much visitor experience of the site factors into decisions made by Parks Canada.

GPNHS was chosen as a case study for this thesis as it has significant archaeological and heritage components throughout its history that continues to the present day. Heritage embeds a social meaning to a physical location that becomes engrained into the collective memory of a people who choose which aspects affirm their collective identity (Orser 2010, 131; Timoney 2020, 434). Acadian nationalism centered Grand-Pré as a symbolic homeland, with the

Anglophone community seeking to balance the perceived French domination of the area during the mid-twentieth century. An agreed narrative of peaceful Acadian peasant farmers came to be the dominant heritage narrative that can be observed from the nineteenth century through to the present day at Grand-Pré. Historic sites often have archaeological components that aid in the reconstruction of select historical periods and people that are represented by the site. GPNHS is one such historic site, representing Acadian history and culture. The development of historical archaeology had especially been associated with reconstructing sites connected to important parts of a nation's history (Orser 2010, 131). The development of GPNHS is no different, as archaeology was used as a foundation for the reconstruction of the parish church.

This thesis begins with a historical background (Chapter 1) that goes over the history of Acadia, Grand-Pré, key conflicts that came to be represented at GPNHS, the 1755 Deportation, New England Planter occupation and their descendants. This is both to give an understanding of the site's history and highlighting what would come to be important pieces in later heritage narratives. This is followed by an examination of the nineteenth century antiquarian archaeological activities and purchase of the site by John Frederic Herbin (Chapter 2). This begins the analysis of archival material that details how archaeological excavations set a basis in how the 'Land of Evangeline' became focused in the area that would become GPNHS. Chapter 2 is also where I examine the influence Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's *Evangeline: A Tale of Acadie* had on the interpretation of artifacts and features found at the site. Analysis of archival material (Chapter 3) continues with a focus on the tourism publications of the twentieth century, their evolution overtime to reflect the contested nature of the heritage, and purchases by both the Dominion Atlantic Railway (DAR) and Parks Canada. Finally (Chapter 4) there is an examination of Parks Canada's site management policies, how this incorporates modern

archaeological projects, and the endurance of the heritage narratives that emerged in the past century and a half.

1. Historical Background

To understand why GPNHS has developed the way it has, an account for its history must be made. Grand-Pré was only one of the Acadian villages within Acadia, but it is one of the best known of them to the general populace. This is due to the historic significance that was assigned to it during the nineteenth century; a significance that continues to the present day. Acadians and English Nova Scotians alike built up the mythos of Grand-Pré during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which is discussed in the next chapter. Key to this thesis are the events that would become memorialized at the site, such as the 1747 Battle of Grand-Pré and the 1755 Deportation, as well as the excavation of coffins, foundations, and a well during the nineteenth century. How this history has been told has affected the heritage narratives throughout the historic site's lifetime, specifically, how these narratives have then been transformed or misinterpreted to support claims made by interest groups of the past in the form of site presentation and interpretation. Thus, it is important to understand the people and events that would become the inspiration for GPNHS throughout its development.

Grand-Pré Until 1755

The Acadians first came to Nova Scotia in the seventeenth century. Settling primarily in Port Royal with some scattered populations across the peninsula, the Acadian population numbered approximately four hundred and thirty in 1670 (Coleman 1968, 2). This population would quickly begin to expand beyond this initial area, leading to the spread of Acadian colonies throughout Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and parts of New England and eastern Quebec. Unlike their British counterparts, the majority of whom cleared the forests for land as their primary technique, the Acadian colonists dyked the salt marshes of the Annapolis

Valley using sod and wood (Bleakney 2004, 45). This technique created a rich and fertile landscape for Acadian livestock to feed, as animal husbandry was the primary means of trade with surrounding colonies. French and British conflict not only for control of what would become Nova Scotia, but North America as a whole, would last one hundred and fifty years beginning in 1613 when the British attacked the Port Royal habitation (LeBlanc 2003, 24). The conflict would not only shape the colonies but would also set the stage for British treatment of the Acadians. France and Great Britain, the major colonizers of North America, traded the area of Acadia throughout the late seventeenth century and up until 1755. The changing political landscape of New France, as well as Acadia's physical distance from Europe, separated Acadian colonists from an immediate connection to their homeland in France.

Acadian bonds formed along the lines of kinship and religious beliefs, though no central governing body formed to create a uniform populace (LeBlanc 2003, 23). In this way, the Acadians were a diverse population that varied in political, economic, and social makeup. Communities often took the form of spread-out villages within a greater geographic area, of which Grand-Pré is an example. Grand-Pré is part of the wider area of Les Mines, or the Minas Basin, that was the common geographical label found in both French and English records (Coleman 1968, 2). First settled in 1680 by Acadians from Port Royal led by Pierre Melanson, and Pierre Theriault in 1682, Grand-Pré was the center of this Minas Basin settlement (Coleman 1968, 1, 3). By the year 1700, the population of Grand-Pré came to rival that of Port Royal and would continue to grow into one of the largest populated settlements of Acadians until the Deportation in 1755 (Coleman 1968, 3). Records have the population at Grand-Pré at the time of the Deportation to be approximately 2500. Acadia, such as with other instances of territories under French rule, was sectioned into seigneuries, with one landowner being granted title to the

land that was then worked by habitants. Acadian habitants, on paper, were assigned their lots by their seigneurs and paid their dues through agricultural efforts. In reality, land grants were often flexible due to absent landlords, properties informally changing hands, and local figures such as Pierre Melanson and Pierre Theriault having more influence in how territory prospered rather than the seigneurs who held land titles (Le Blanc 2003, 23; Coleman 1968, 4). Absentee landowners and neglected dues were common among seigneur-Acadian relationships. This was particularly the case with Grand-Pré, and the Minas region, with no apparent record of collecting dues or active engagement in this settlement by the governing seigneur (Coleman 1968, 4). It was both this lack of interference and rich farmland that led to the prosperous conditions of Grand-Pré inhabitants.

Figure 1: French map of Acadia from 1748/49 focused on Grand-Pré and surrounding area. Source: Nova Scotia Archives Map Collection F/202-1748

Despite this idealized image of the Acadians and their apparent lack of connection to the outside world, the actions of France and Great Britain, along with their New England colonies, were of great influence. Following the 1713 Treaty of Utrecht, Grand-Pré, and Minas, were officially within British control (Coleman 1968, 14). Though the 1713 was the final official date of when the French ceded of the colony to Great Britain prior to the 1755 Deportation, there were significant conflicts within the colony of Nova Scotia leading up to the Deportation. The War of Austrian Succession may have been centered on the monarchs of Europe, but conflict broke out between Britain and France. Thus, their North American colonies became battle grounds where they could act on national desires for expansion in the effort to push the other out. Notably, the 1747 Battle of Grand-Pré, also called the Massacre of Grand-Pré by the British, would be significant in British colonial officials' decision regarding the Acadian population. Archibald MacMechan's book, *Red Snow on Grand Pré,* illustrates this conflict as historians came to record the event. This battle also became an event that twentieth-century historians, such as MacMechan, came to write about widely in the wake of the creation of the Grand-Pré tourist site.

Following his assault on the Island Battery of Louisburg, Colonel Arthur Noble was charged with leading a detachment of five hundred New England militiamen to protect Port Royal, now called Annapolis Royal, in 1747. Noble and his men stationed themselves at during the winter of 1746-47, reluctantly hosted by the local Acadians (Fowler 2012, 1). Stationed at Chignecto at the same time were French forces, led by Nicolas-Antoine Coulon de Villiers. Local Acadians knew of this French position and attempted to inform the New England force, but they dismissed the possibility of French action during the winter (Fowler 2012, 1). Noble's decision to wait out the winter would prove perilous. Coleman writes that the French encountered an Acadian wedding

party in Gaspereau that not only informed them of the New England forces at Grand-Pré but guided them to the British quarters at Grand-Pré Coleman (1968, 50). Whether this statement was fully true or colored by the historical record of the mid-twentieth century, de Villiers and his men came upon Noble in the winter of 1746-47. The Battle, or Massacre, of Grand-Pré saw Noble and seventy of his men as casualties, with French forces losing fewer lives overall (Fowler 2012, 2). De Villiers withdrew his men after the encounter, with New England records listing a set of conditions for their surrender, including marching with honors of war, retaining muskets, and no return for prisoners taken (Coleman 1968, 53). Another British militia was sent to Grand-Pré in the spring of 1748 to reestablish the post Noble had originally held (LeBlanc 2003, 34). This battle, the story of an honorable retreat, and Col. Noble himself, came to be represented during the twentieth century as a reaction by the English-speaking population to the amount of attention Acadians received at the site.

Surveyor-General Charles Morris, one survivor of the Battle of Grand-Pré, proposed a plan of expulsion to the Governor's Council in Halifax in 1754 to deal with the potential French liability (Fowler 2012, 2; McKay and Bates 2010, 32). This plan for expulsion was adopted by the Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia, Charles Lawrence. Morris, along with the New England members of the executive council called into question the loyalty of the Acadian habitants to the British as part of the argument for their expulsion. Acadian loyalty was questioned by the British as early as the 1710s, with plans for their removal a proposition brought up by officials. Be that as it may, it was not until Britain and its colonies were again at war that this option would gain renewed attention (McKay and Bates 2010, 32). Most Acadians would again refuse to swear an unqualified oath of allegiance in their wish to remain neutral. This lack of an official oath led British officials to suspect the Acadians would betray the British

to the French. Despite the overarching issue of Acadian loyalty, the Acadians met with no military confrontation after 1748 until the 1755 Deportation (LeBlanc 2003, 34). This sense of peace and stability that the Acadians of Grand-Pré, and the rest of Acadia, felt would only change as the conflict between France and Britain raised the subject of Acadian loyalty.

Though most Acadian habitants would not support any French forces in the province, their presence as a French-speaking population led to unease amongst British officials (Coleman 1968, 57). Acadian representatives had refused to swear an Oath of Allegiance to both the British and French administrations, professing that they wished to remain neutral. In 1730, the Acadians had signed a conditional oath under Governor Phillips promising they would not have to bear arms (LeBlanc 2003, 32). The Acadians believed the matter of their neutrality settled after this oath; however, this continued profession of neutrality would not convince the British, with Lieutenant-Governor Charles Lawrence deciding that the Acadians must be deported. Lawrence assigned Lieutenant-Colonel John Winslow the task of carrying out the deportation orders at Grand-Pré during September 1755. Due to Winslow's participation at the deportations at Fort Beauséjour one month prior alongside Lawrence it was determined that he would lead the deportation at Grand-Pré (LeBlanc 2003, 36). Upon arriving with his three-hundred-man detachment on August 19, Winslow set his command post at Sainte-Charles-des-Mines parish church, with quarters in the priest's house. He then ordered the elders of the village to take sacred objects from the building, as well as ordering his men not to steal from the inhabitants (LeBlanc 2003, 36; Fowler 2016, 39). He would ensure his orders were met by doling out punishment via flogging to any of his men who defied these orders, recording these incidents, along with a detailed account of the deportation, in his journal.

One of his entries notes that Winslow knew that the church was exposed to potential enemy assault. A wooden palisade was ordered by Winslow to be erected around the three buildings to protect their position and avoid the fate of Noble. After this first phase, the palisade was extended to contain the parish cemetery (Fowler 2016, 39-41). No attack would come against the stationed British forces, and on September 5, 1755, Winslow summoned the men and boys older than ten of Grand-Pré to the church to read the deportation order and detain them. Women, girls, and young boys stayed at their homes to wait for the men who would not return. Winslow's orders from Lawrence state:

> "That the Inhabitants May Not have it in their Power to Return to this Province, Nor to Join in Strengthening the French of Canada [Quebec] or Louisbourge [Louisburg], it is Resolved that they shall be Dispersed Among His Majesty's Colonies Upon the Continent of America." (Winslow 1883 [1755], 79).

Winslow told his captive Acadians that this matter was disagreeable, though necessary. Despite detaining the men on September 5, the embarkation would not begin until October 8. Poor weather, sickness, late transport ships, and Acadian escape attempts, among other issues delayed the deportation efforts (LeBlanc 2003, 39). The last of those deported from Grand-Pré did not sail until December 20, three months after the original detention of the men. In fulfilling Lawrence's orders of deported Acadians not being able to return, Winslow ordered his men to destroy their property. In his journal he records a total of six hundred and ninety-eight buildings, including two hundred and fifty-five houses, destroyed by fire (LeBlanc 2003, 44-45). The approximately 2,200 Acadians who had occupied Grand-Pré were then sent to New England, other English colonies in North America, and England. Other Acadians would come to settle in Louisiana or return to France after the Treaty of Paris in 1763 (LeBlanc 2003, 46-47). None would return to Nova Scotia until the Lords of Trade in London allowed for those who would swear an oath of allegiance to return in 1763. Returning Acadians were settled and established

within their communities by the early eighteenth century, though they no longer had access to the fertile agricultural land they held before 1755 (LeBlanc 2003, 48). The Acadians were now the minority within Nova Scotia, as English-speaking colonists had populated the colony and taken the vacant farmlands for their own.

Figure 2: Ships Take Acadians into Exile 1755 by Claude Picard. Source: Acadian.org

Grand-Pré After 1755

The lands of Grand-Pré sat empty and untended until the immigration of English-speaking colonists, the New England Planters, beginning in 1760 (LeBlanc 2003, 46). It was not until the French were fully removed from Nova Scotia that the Governor's council put the initial proclamation in the *Boston Gazette* that advertised available land grants within the now vacant Nova Scotia (Hamilton 1910, 59-60). Grand-Pré, along with the rest of Nova Scotia, was divided

into lots for these incoming colonists. Interest was immediate amongst the New England populace, with agents being questioned about amounts of land and terms of rent after the proclamation was published. Hamilton writes that, “In eastern Connecticut and Rhode Island interest was strongest in the Minas region” Hamilton (1910, 62). Two hundred New England families would settle in the Minas Basin region, populating the townships of Horton and Cornwallis (Hamilton 1910, 62-64). From the 1760s until the late 1800s, the former Grand-Pré area was used for general agriculture. The destroyed Acadian property allowed for the New England Planters to start fresh, with the only noticeable remnants of the Acadians being the dyked salt marshes.

As the Horton and Cornwallis townships developed, the area that we now know as the Grand-Pré National Historic Site (GPNHS) was utilized as a plough field (Dunn 1982, 3). From 1760 into the mid-1800s this field remained unremarkable to locals. Outside of a filled well and row of old willows, both the community regarded as Acadian features, the site was not picked out as particularly special. This piece of land would evolve into the site we know today based on activities and information that began during the nineteenth century. A publication aimed as tourists from 1895, *Beautiful Nova Scotia*, details what was found by antiquarians at the site, beginning with a filled well the community referred to as Evangeline’s Well. Elder members of the community could not recall anyone living on the property where it was discovered, thus they attributed this feature to the Acadians (Baker, Chase, and Spinney 1895, 31). “Very near the well” the foundation that became associated with the parish church due to its size, along with a coffin, was found approximately ten years prior to *Beautiful Nova Scotia*’s publication. This coffin, as well as the artifacts found within the well were displayed for the tourists that came into

the area in search of a simpler experience that came from the sense of nostalgia for an idealized past.

While the Romantic Era was already influential when it came to these tourists, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's epic poem put the spotlight on Grand-Pré. *Evangeline: A Tale of Acadie*, first published in 1847, tells the tale of the tragic romance of Evangeline and Gabriel, two lovers separated by the Deportation in 1755. The poem's appeal, outside of the tragic romance and journey of the titular heroine, came from Longfellow's description of Acadia. Longfellow was originally told the story at an 1840 dinner party in Massachusetts where he hosted Nathaniel Hawthorne and Reverend Conolly. Hawthorne was a friend and fellow author who prompted the Reverend, who was the rector of St Matthew's Episcopal Church, to tell the tale of tragic Acadian romance. The Reverend was told the story by one of his parishioners, and thus the story had already gone through at least one retelling before reaching Longfellow at his dinner party (McKay and Bates 2010, 71). While he would not visit Nova Scotia before the poem's publication, Longfellow did consult Haliburton's two volume *Historical and Statistical Account of Nova Scotia* for information on the Deportation. Despite his lack of firsthand experience with Nova Scotia or Acadians, Longfellow would draw on his experience amongst Swedish peasants to characterize his Acadians in *Evangeline* (Fergusson 2003, 8). This lack of firsthand knowledge of Acadians or Nova Scotia did not affect the poems reception, as readers were drawn by the rich descriptions of simple Acadian peasants within their idyllic landscape.

Interest in Grand-Pré was expressed through both tourists and antiquarian archaeologists looking for artifactual evidence of Acadians. These were co-occurring, with each building off the activities of the other. As new artifacts were found, more people wanted pieces for themselves. Tourists arrived at Grand-Pré with the expectation of encountering a piece of Acadian history,

with some taking any souvenir they found at the Grand-Pré site. The identification of the specific site came from community tradition, as previously mentioned. Before the excavations of the site found anything of note, there were still those who would walk near the site to see a piece of Evangeline's home. When a coffin was excavated at what would become GPNHS, it was displayed at the railway station where it was reduced to nothing by American tourists taking souvenirs (Dunn 1982, 4). The well, and foundations of buildings were also dug up before 1895, with their contents and presence furthering solidifying the tradition of the site being that of the church (Baker, Chase, and Spinney 1895, 31). John Frederic Herbin prevented further unrestrained digging by purchasing the plot of land in 1907. Herbin held interest in Grand-Pré and Acadian history through his mother's Acadian heritage. He, along with associates, intended to transform the site into a memorial park and attraction (Dunn 1982, 5). This would spawn the first wave of the site's interpretation based on the archaeology of the site.

2. 19 Century Antiquarians and Herbin

Antiquarian archaeologists are archaeologists from the nineteenth century that were focused on finding valuable artifacts and features rather than methodological investigation. They were usually hired by wealthy patrons who housed finds in private collections or sold them to museums where they would be displayed. While these types of archaeologists are usually thought of in association with Greco-Roman or Egyptian artifacts, antiquarian activities took place throughout the world. Antiquarians were interested through either an amateur academic curiosity or familiarity with local knowledge (Griffiths 1996, 1). As they were amateurs, professional academics disdained these activities, despite the artifacts and knowledge antiquarians produced. Amateur antiquarian activities were replaced with the emerging discipline of an institutional archaeology beginning in mid-nineteenth century university centers (Griffiths 1996, 22). Within Nova Scotia, antiquarian archaeologists began digging at Grand-Pré during the 1880s to find remnants of pre-1755 Acadian inhabitants. Specifically, two young men who lived in the community would take to the field near the railway station "guided by tradition and the hollow sound of the earth" at the site they chose (Dunn 1982, 3). These were John Woodworth and Robert Duncan who are credited with excavating the well and a coffin around 1880, according to a 1919 newspaper article. A contradicting account written by Placide Gaudet credited innkeeper L. C. Duncanson with the excavation in 1895 (Dunn 1982, 3); it is the first account of the excavations that is most likely the most accurate one as *Beautiful Nova Scotia* mentions these features, along with foundations and artifacts, in its 1895 publication.

Already there is contradiction in how this original antiquarian archaeology is recorded, relying more on public memory of the events than documentation. One record credits Woodworth and Duncan, while another credits Duncanson. The exact account of who found

what, and in what year these finds were made, has been lost due to no existing firsthand records from the antiquarians. As mentioned previously, the specific field was chosen due to the local public memory associated with it, which only grew stronger once artifacts were found. Longfellow's *Evangeline* put a spotlight on Grand-Pré, but the archaeology is what guided the both the tourism and subsequent development of Grand-Pré into the national historic site it became. That is not to say that a commemorative site would not have been created had antiquarians not dug into the field. As McKay and Bates say, *Evangeline* "induced in many an almost obsessive need to experience Longfellow's imagined world" (McKay and Bates 2010, 73). It is the pairing of this poem with the archaeological findings that set the foundation for what would draw more attention to the site. That both a coffin and foundation were found close together meant that only one way of interpreting the site would become the dominant narrative. It did not matter whether these assumptions were true, at least during the nineteenth century, as all that truly mattered to visitors and tourism operators was that Evangeline and her fictional Grand-Pré could be grafted onto the site.

Around the same time as Herbin's initial phases of acquisition and development planning two key Acadian political groups came into being that would have a hand in the future of the Grand-Pré site. These were the Société national l'Assomption (SNA), founded in 1881, and the Société mutuelle l'Assomption (SMA), founded in 1903 (LeBlanc 2003, 104, 112). The SNA was formed following the first congregation of Acadians in the Maritimes following the deportation, with many of its spokesmen and organizers involved with the later creation of SMA. However, it was SMA that became a highly powerful organization for Acadians at local levels and was most involved with the site development of Grand-Pré during the early twentieth century. This was due to SMA holding legal status, and thus able to be recognized by the

government and hold land titles (LeBlanc 2003, 112-113). Much like other identity groups, members of SNA and SMA created a community that represented a growth in nationalistic sentiment that was not tethered by geographic borders. The adoption of symbols was a key part of this, with two of the most prominent for the Acadians being Evangeline and Grand-Pré. It is noted that these, while rooted in Acadian history, are closely linked to Longfellow's poem in ways that resemble the adoption of other poetic linkages of identity and place by similar minority groups (LeBlanc 2003, 114; McKay and Bates 2010, 93). The focus on Grand-Pré especially has become significant to Acadians, as well as the communication of heritage and history that the site presents today. The site would become even more significant once foundations and artifacts began to be discovered on the plot of land that is now GPNHS, as SMA would come to own a section of the field where the church foundation was traditionally believed to be located. David Otto Parker, author of *Souvenir of Grand Pre and Wolfville*, maps the field (Figure 3), with C representing the parish church, W 'Evangeline's Well', G the graves, F the priests house, and T as the row of willows on the site.

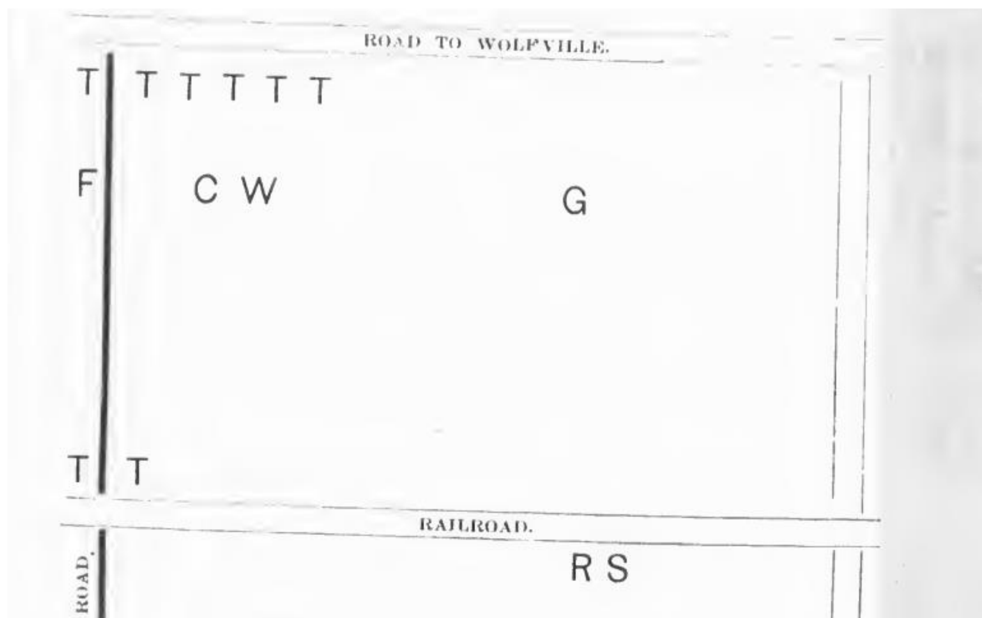

Figure 3: Map of Grand-Pré as understood by David Otto Parker. Source: Parker 1897, 26.

Antiquarians digging at Grand-Pré, as previously mentioned, had originally been looking for gold and valuables when they found Acadian artifacts. As these excavations were not undertaken in the same methodological practice of modern archaeology, accurate records, proper storage of artifacts, and attention to detail were not common amongst antiquarians, in favour of digs for any artifacts valuable to collectors. Due to this, there is a lack of documentation from the antiquarians who first found the artifacts at Grand-Pré. Knowledge of what was found were documented in the newspaper articles and tourist publications that cover the site to the raise appeal for potential tourists. *Beautiful Nova Scotia* and *Souvenir of Wolfville and Grand Pre* both give an account of the artifacts, with photographs and drawings of the items and a coffin appearing in other publications. Hammers, tongs, and other metal tools were found in 'Evangeline's Well', two foundations with a fireplace excavated in one, fragments of bricks and wood, nails, glass, and at least two coffins were all found at the site by antiquarian excavators (Baker, Chase, and Spinney 1895, 31; Dunn 1982, 5; Parker 1897, 5-6). These artifacts were not preserved in a manner twenty-first century archaeologists would recognize as common practice.

Today we see artifacts displayed with informative plaques detailing what they are and their significance. The artifacts found at Grand-Pré during the nineteenth century did not have that treatment and we do not know the precise whereabouts of artifacts from 'Evangeline's Well.' Stones from the foundation were taken to be repurposed, and the coffin was destroyed by tourists taking souvenirs. Parker mentions in *Souvenir of Wolfville and Grand Pre* that he took some nails, brick fragments, and melted glass, along with other artifacts for souvenirs during his visit to the site (Parker 1897, 5). Despite this, the artifacts, and how they were found, became part of the site narrative and heritage. With some equating the material culture itself with heritage, and though this is not how archaeologists view the archaeological record as Smith and Waterton

suggest, artifacts do make heritage tangibly knowable (Smith and Waterton 2009, 42). In fact, these artifacts, and the heritage they represent, came to surpass that of Longfellow's Acadia as represented in *Evangeline* by the mid-twentieth century*,* though they originally allowed a merge of history and Longfellow's fiction to create heritage.

The artifacts dug out of the well served to reinforce ideas of Longfellow's fictional Grand-Pré on the site. *Beautiful Nova Scotia* links these to Basil the blacksmith from the pages of the poem, writing "not unlikely that the smithy of Basil was in this immediate neighbor- hood, for there were exhumed from the old well several hammers and tongs, and other implements of that craft" (Baker, Chase and Spinney 1895, 31). They further link *Evangeline* to the site through statements such as, "it is by no means improbable that the beautiful daughter of Benedict drew water from its depths" in relation to the well. It was not only the artifacts, but the features of the site that drew the attention of visitors. A row of willow trees, known as the 'Old French Willows' (Figure 4), also became linked to the Acadians due to an estimation of their age, with David Otto Parker describing them as, "exotics from Normandy, that have wrestled with the storms for over two hundred years" and that these willows were "almost indestructible" (Parker 1897, 5). Parker promotes taking a branch to use as a cane during visitors' tour of the province; Parker recommends that this branch could be planted upon returning home so the tourist could have their own French Willow. Such connections created a blur between the fictional world of Longfellow's poem and the reality of Grand-Pré and the Acadian inhabitants, a blend that allowed for the imposition of an idealized fictional landscape where a visitor could find an Acadian souvenir of their own if they had a shovel and patience to dig long enough. This blending of fantasy and reality will be explored fully in the next chapter, which deals with the

official tourism that developed out of these early antiquarian activities, as well as those of John Frederic Herbin.

Figure 4*:* Photograph of the Old French Willows at Grand-Pré dated to ca. 1900. Source: Nova Scotia Archives.

Herbin was a jeweler, local historian, and writer of Acadian descent by his mother, a Robichaud who lived in Wolfville, Nova Scotia during the nineteenth century until his death in 1923 (Coleman 1968, 112; LeBlanc 2003, 115; Dunn 1982, 22). His interest in Grand-Pré stemmed from his familial connections as well as from Longfellow’s poem. As the field of land that is now GPNHS received increased attention from those who sought either to find more artifacts or to walk amongst features such as the ‘Old French Willows’, he desired to preserve it. Though he criticized Longfellow’s lack of historical detail in his work, he wrote romantic works focused on Grand-Pré and the Acadians. One such poem, *The Returned Acadian*, reads, “Along my father's dykes I roam again, / Among the willows by the river-side” (Herbin 1893, 10).

Calling himself the last of the Acadians at Grand-Pré, he would not only write the history of the community, such as his *History of Grand-Pré* in 1911, but in 1907 purchased the field where the digging had been taking place with the intention creating a memorial park (LeBlanc 2003, 115; Fowler and Noel 2017, 50-51). Following the purchase, Herbin and examined the presumed site of the church, in turn excavating two foundations and a fireplace which had already been uncovered by antiquarians. These excavations left no doubt to Herbin that the property was the location of Saint-Charles-des-Mines parish church with an accompanying priest's house based on his understanding of the buried foundations (Dunn 1982, 5). This ensured the proceeding development would memorialize Grand-Pré using the church and cemetery to create a park that represented the reality of the site's history through the interpretations first made by the antiquarians. Initial development included the erection of a stone cross, which came to be known as Herbin's Cross, to mark where the coffin was found. His goal was to create a memorial park where a replica church would be built over the foundation of the original.

Though Herbin connected himself to Acadians through his mother, he did not have ties to the larger Acadian community. He was part of the Anglophone community, outside of the growing organizations of Acadian elites. Rather than moving forward without consulting members of the community, Herbin attempted to include Acadians in his efforts to create a memorial park by contacting both SNA and SMA to no avail; LeBlanc speculates this rejection was either because he was Anglophone or Protestant in combination with a member of SNA's death during the time of correspondence shifting the priorities of the group LeBlanc (2003, 115-116). Despite the lack of interest during this phase of the site's development, the Acadian groups, SNA and SMA, took an active role at the site following its sale in 1919. Their refusal to join Herbin's development during this stage was not due to the use of the image of Evangeline or an idealized Acadia, both

of which Acadian groups utilized in their own circles. Idealized images of Acadia and the Acadians were not isolated to Herbin's memorial park or the site itself, as idea of Acadia became popularized to Nova Scotians through *Evangeline*.

Nova Scotians had already embraced the positive reception of *Evangeline* as a marked improvement on previous depictions of the province as a backwater suitable only for banishment (McKay and Bates 2010, 93). Tourism books began to be published with titles calling Nova Scotia the "Home of Evangeline" with images of innocent ingenues gazing at their lost homeland, ironically celebrating the British, and by extension Nova Scotian, expulsion of the Acadians during the formation of a provincial identity. An attitude of a friendly feud towards the Acadians, was often adopted when discussing the Acadians and 1755 Deportation. The Deportation, for British-descended Nova Scotians, though perhaps unfortunate, was not ultimately devastating since they could live alongside the Acadians in the present day (McKay and Bates 2010, 92). Therefore, the Deportation was not as tragic an event since some Acadians had returned to Nova Scotia after 1763. *Evangeline* fueled this view, with the Deportation being downplayed in favour of the many opportunities for success Acadians found in their new homes, such as Basil the Blacksmith's declaration of "welcome to a home, that is perchance better than the old one!" (Longfellow 2003, 101). This fictional depiction was not the reality of Acadians following their expulsion. Acadians were not welcomed in many areas where they were originally sent, with groups eventually settling in Louisiana or France in search of better homes. However, *Evangeline* was also embraced by the Acadian population as part of their national identity formation. The poem was circulated throughout Acadian circles at universities, daughters began to be named after the heroine, and Evangeline (Figure 5) became a heroic figure to many of the Acadians in the vein of Robert the Bruce to the Scots (McKay and Bates 2010,

93). Despite *Evangeline* being written by an American with no connection to the Acadians, the poem resonated with the community elites in universities and Anglophones that was reinforced by the archaeological finds at Grand-Pré.

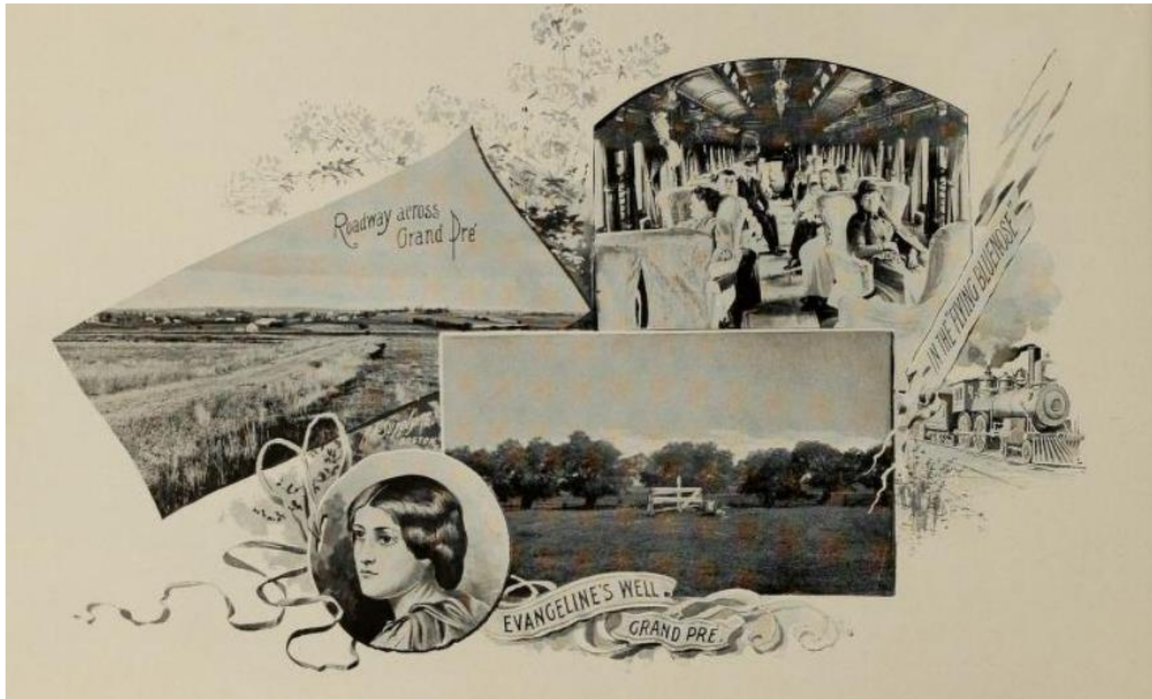

Figure 5: Collage of images from a tourist publication depicting Grand-Pré. Source: *Beautiful Nova Scotia* page 30 dated to 1895.

Archaeology was the basis of the site's information, with interpretation of the site through the heritage narratives established in *Evangeline* and from public memory set the foundation for what would become GPNHS that Parks Canada operates today. Popular ideas of a passive, pious, and peasant Acadia fit into the nineteenth-century, as well as early twentieth-century, identity of a British descended Nova Scotia. It equally eased the conscience of English-speaking Canadians and New Englanders for their ancestral benefits from the deportation and gave an international boost to a province that became known as the "home of the happy" (McKay and Bates 2010, 93). However, this was not universally accepted. Parker points out to his American readers that they "must for a little lay aside their old England" when visiting the site and to "…remember that it

was their own New England ancestors who caused to be written this painful page in Acadian history" (Parker 1897, 18). Therefore, the attention the site, and Acadian history, garnered regarding the Deportation had the effect of highlighting the role ancestors of residents, as well as visitors from New England, had on the Acadians. An eventual push against this narrative of Acadian focus in the area would arise during the 1930s, which will be discussed in the next chapter. Nonetheless, the narrative of peasant Acadians, generally denoted with an Evangeline-type illustration, remained popular. In the creation of this heritage narrative, public memory overpowered history. There were historical writings that recounted the history of Acadia, in more detail about than solely the deportation of Acadians at Grand-Pré, but these were not as attention-grabbing as Longfellow's romantic tragedy.

Already heritage had taken a precedence over history in how the site is viewed by the greater public, with scholarship and archaeology reflecting this sentiment. While factual accounts were given, at times with their bias apparent, a focus was on monumental elements of history. Historians, such as Herbin and MacMechan, focused on major players and the events, with antiquarian archaeologists prioritising more monumental sites and valuable artifacts over those of common people or everyday use. Thus, when a heritage narrative focusing on monumental historical moments is central to the narratives of the site is not surprising. It set up the future relationship that heritage has to the archaeology. As we have seen how antiquarians were guided by the local understanding of the site based the memory of elder residents, archaeology in this period was dominated by local heritage. This included influence from the growing tourism trend of the 'Evangeline phenomenon' that drew in American tourists who were looking to experience Evangeline's Nova Scotia, away from the modernity of their cities (Fowler and Noel 2017, 48-49). Herbin planned for the site to not only be a memorial park dedicated to the absent Acadians,

but also as a site for tourists to visit and satisfy cravings of this phenomenon. Included in these plans was the creation of a memorial church, based on the assumption that the Saint-Charles-des-Mines parish church was located at the site.

This would not come to pass, as Herbin's inability to afford the site's maintenance and development of the site led to its sale to the Dominion Atlantic Railway (DAR) in 1917, who conveniently owned the railway station along the site. However, the site at Grand-Pré would continue to be developed along the interpretation determined by the antiquarian investigations of a peasant Acadian past and the church's presence. Here, the past, as represented by the artifacts, cemetery, and foundations, became the product of the nineteenth century interpretations, which set the basis for how the site's development would progress into the twentieth century (Lowenthal 2015, 69). Interpretations that state that this site was the home of the parish church, priest's house, and cemetery, with Evangeline having once walked along the willows remained dominant. These narratives became popularized not only through circulation of *Evangeline* in connection with the site, but also through the works of the tourism publications that have become a source of antiquarian excavations. *Beautiful Nova Scotia* and *Souvenir of Wolfville and Grand Pre* are examples of this, as they perpetuated the site's Acadian connection through the poem. Not only the literal ties of artifacts, such as hammers and tongs, to Longfellow's Basil the blacksmith, but also statements of how to enjoy the view which the poem enacted in the landscape. One of the recommendations for the reader of *Beautiful Nova Scotia* is sit, "under one of the wide spreading apple trees, where you should take out your copy of " Evangeline," and read that sad but beautiful story with the scene of its enactment spread out before your gaze" (1895, 32). Thus, even those who did not have an interest in the artifacts were encouraged to engage with the site through the heritage.

Though Herbin would only complete a small portion of his plans for the site, the purchase of the site by the DAR company in 1917 saw the creation of what we think of today as being main features of the site. As DAR began their tenure of ownership, heritage continued to dominate the site's presentation. Through this period, the provincial government took an increased interest in tourism, with official semi-annual publications being created to not only advertise Grand-Pré, but areas of interest throughout the province. These track the heritage narratives presented to the public, mirroring that of the site's presentation. They also showcase the changes in narratives, both permanent and temporary, that show the contested nature of the site's heritage. Little archaeological excavation would be done in this period, as construction of the site was the priority for DAR. Parks Canada increased archaeological projects after their purchase of site in 1957, though these were completed after the mid-twentieth century and closer to the official designation of the site as a national historic site. While changes to the presentation reflected the aims of the site's owners, the standard narrative of the Grand-Pré based on the foundations from the period of antiquarians and early tourism settled into place.

3. Tourism and the Creation of a Historic Site

The Dominion Atlantic Railway (DAR) purchased the site of Grand-Pré in 1917 with the intention of continuing its development. Unlike Herbin's intention to create a memorial, DAR did not purchase the site out of a desire to preserve a piece of Acadian history, but rather to market the site to promote tourists to use their railway. However, one condition of Herbin's sale to DAR was Acadian ownership of land on the site for the creation of a memorial. Negotiations lasted until 1919, when DAR and SMA, on behalf of the Acadian community, signed a contract for the sale of the land and the conditions for the church's construction (LeBlanc 2003, 117-118). This began a dual development of the site through Anglophone and Francophone ideas for the site narratives. DAR focused on drawing in a broad spectrum of tourists, whereas SMA and Acadian community wanted the site to commemorate their heritage as a dispersed people. The partnership between DAR and SMA worked to develop the site into a memorial park with commemorative church, garden, and statue of Evangeline, despite their different motivations for development. As organizations both embraced the image of peasant farmer Acadia and Evangeline, the site's first decades saw not only development along this narrative, but publicity aimed it towards potential visitors. Figure 6 is an example of the plan for memorial parks design, drawn by Percy Nobbs in 1919, with the help of DAR architect E. R. Clarke, based on the original plans made by Herbin (Gagné 2013, 81). It was deliberately designed with a Victorian garden and rural English country house style, which fit into the antimodernist trend of the decade (Gagné 2013, 82; McKay 2009, 33). Once the design for the park was agreed upon by DAR and SMA, development began on the statue and memorial church.

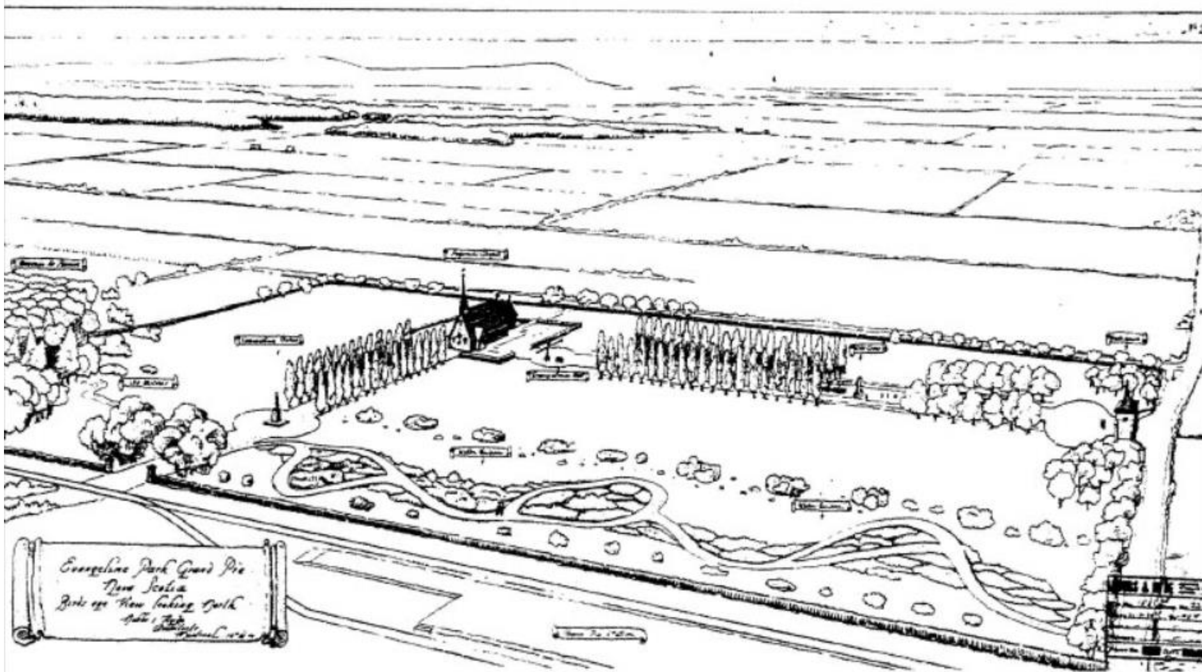

Figure 6: Plan of the Grand-Pré Memorial Park drawn by Percy Nobbs, 1919 (John Bland Canadian Architecture Collection, McGill University Library) Source: Gagné 2013, 83.

The first major development of the site was that of the statue of Evangeline in 1920, with an unveiling that showed early contention between the Acadian community and DAR. Designed by Philippe Hébert and completed by his son, Henri, the statue was unveiled on July 29, 1920 (Dunn 1982, 10-11). Shipping of the statue to Grand-Pré saw its arrival delayed to the day before its scheduled unveiling. This rushed arrival was paired with the Imperial Press Conference's visit to Grand-Pré the day of the unveiling, leading to Lady Burnham, wife of a London reporter, conducting the unveiling. The Imperial Press Conference had visited Canada during their second conference, making stops throughout Nova Scotia during the first leg of their journey. The conference's arrival in Nova Scotia aligned with the arrival of the statue in a way that DAR knew would draw attention through the press exposure. This tactic worked in their favour, as one attendee wrote in his book on the conference that the unveiling was "the prettiest ceremony of our tour" in conjunction with describing the memorial park (Donald 1920, 19). In their haste to

take advantage of the Imperial Press Conference's arrival, DAR did not invite Acadian officials to the statue's unveiling. The lack of Acadian presence was criticized by the newspaper *Evangeline* through scathing opinion pieces; one such piece from September 1920 asked to know if leaders from SNA or SMA had been invited "*avant de jeter trop fortement la pierre à ceux qui ont organisé la fête*" (Léger 1920).[1] DAR balanced these with justifications to the newspaper which pointed to the statue's arrival and lack of proper time to invite Acadian officials in favour of focusing on the presence of international press (Dunn 1982, 11). This choice echoed across the Acadian community as devaluing their history and experience.

Smith and Waterton, when discussing the role of heritage and identity, say, "memories and people's sense of self and belonging-their sense of identity- are highly emotive constructs" (Smith and Waterton 2009, 49). Significant events taking place at these sites often involve members of the community being present, or at least invited. Grand-Pré, by this time, had become part of the history that Acadians passed down through the generations as their central homeland, gatherings and events held at the site serve to reinforce and transmit that history (Norkumas 1993, 99). The opinion piece from above states that should DAR not have invited Acadians that "*l'honneur de notre race nous aiete ici un devoir celui d'une protestation énergique, et en bon français, aux autorités responsable*" (Léger 1920).[2] Therefore, not including any member of the community during a significant event in its development drew a response from Acadians who felt left out of an event where their history has provided the theme. Their exclusion follows patterns seen with other sites that have meaning to a minority group, as dominant groups historically control the content and presentation at the exclusion of a minority group (Norkumas 1993, 97, 99). This perceived problem was corrected regarding the memorial church, a facet of the site in which Acadian elites played a significant role. A ceremony was held

for the transfer of the church site to SNA in August of 1921, with two hundred attendees from the General Congress of Acadians (Dunn 1982, 11). The congress, first called the *convention nationales acadiennes*, is name of the official Acadian reunion that takes place semi-annually since 1881 (Acadian, n.d.). These gatherings function to strengthen community bonds to their history, that generally involve a type of pilgrimage to meaningful sites to Acadian history, including Grand-Pré, which the memorial church dedication following the land transfer and ceremony in 1921.

Following this ceremony, efforts began to raise funds for the construction of a memorial church. Acadians were encouraged to donate towards the cause, with thousands contributing to the campaign (Dunn 1982, 11). The church, and following monuments erected on and off the Grand-Pré site, contributed to the sense of Acadian nationalism, and Fowler notes these constructions, "symbolically reclaimed the community as the heart of the Acadian nation" (Fowler 2017, 48). The choice of architectural design was symbolic, connecting the Acadians to both the Norman ancestry alluded to in Longfellow as well as to Quebec through borrowings of architectural traditions (Gagné 2013, 77). Linkage not only to an Acadian past, but to French Canadians of Quebec, was a means of emphasizing the "Frenchness" of the project. Construction of the church was completed in the summer of 1922; the Bishop of Saint John, Monseigneur Edouard LeBlanc, blessed the corner stone during a mass held on the church steps on August 16, 1922 (Dunn 1982, 12). While the events surrounding the church did not have as much issue as the Evangeline statue's unveiling, lack of response from the general manager of the site to an invitation to the dedication caused frustration among Acadian elites at the perceived apathy. Dunn quotes one such elite who wrote to the general manager saying they and others were, "…surprised…at the antagonistic stand you took in the last few weeks touching our national

enterprise" (Dunn 1982, 13). Tourist publications from this decade do not reflect the tumultuous relationship between DAR and Acadian elites during this stage in development. Instead, these publications reflected the political aspect of Anglophone Nova Scotia's control of the site (Little and Shackel 2014, 42). Though they serve the function of advertising a specific site, we will see shifts in ideologies resulted in changes in how Grand-Pré was advertised, further illustrating the imbalance of power in favour of Anglophone Nova Scotia. Conflicts between Acadian and British-settler Nova Scotians were glossed over, in favour of either advertising the site as unified effort between groups or as a physical extension of *Evangeline*.

Canada's Ocean Playground, a tourism booklet published in Nova Scotia during the 1920s, pairs an image of the newly constructed memorial church and statue with, "the romantic story of Evangeline and her people portrayed by Longfellow is enshrined at historic Grand Pre"[3]. During the twentieth century the site developed a focus on history as filtered through the heritage narratives established in the previous century. This quote shows that not only was Longfellow's work enshrined at the site, but also the antiquarian features of the site. In conjunction with these narratives, the publications mentioned how close the site is to the railway owned by DAR.[4] This continued into the 1930s, with an article in *The Bluenose Nova Scotia's Own Magazine* 1936 special tourist edition promoting the site to readers through the author's daytrips. The memorial church built atop the original church foundation is used to emphasize that Evangeline and her traditions are being cherished (Kipp 1936, 5). Further, after entering the church museum, Kipp says, "[Visitors] gaze in wonder at the primitive tools with which the Acadians worked and the things with which they surrounded themselves in their homes" (Kipp 1936, 6). Linkage to the Acadian past through these physical artifacts solidified the heritage narrative that had been set as a base during the nineteenth century.

Archaeology, outside of visitor interactions with artifacts, was not prominent during this period. Construction at the site took precedence, with DAR having a greater interest in displaying artifacts than finding them. Later editions of *Canada's Ocean Playground* illustrate this, promoting the features developed by DAR and SNA of the interior church museum and Evangeline's Well. These perpetuated the ideas of the original stories of the well being used by pre-Deportation Acadians, and the church containing "Acadian relics" (*Canada's Ocean Playground*, 1946). This was the standard when engaging with the archaeology within the tourism promotions: a larger emphasis was placed on the story of Grand-Pré being the site of the 1755 Deportation and homeland to Acadians over the poetic origins of the site's tourism. Evangeline and Longfellow steadily decreased in prominence, with Acadian history becoming central to the heritage narrative, though elements of their presence remained. Kipp describes an attendant's response to questions about Evangeline's reality, who said, "Evangeline…is the spirit of French-Canadian girlhood" and further elaborates that, "The spirit, that is, of French-Canadian faith and courage and loyalty…Those who insist upon facts behind their traditions learn Evangeline was the daughter of Benedict Bellefontaine" (Kipp 1936, 6). We see an almost tongue-in-cheek acknowledgement of Evangeline being a fictional woman, while also observing the new focus on Acadian history and culture. This was a dominant aspect of the narratives at the site.

This narrative, as seen with the attendant's response to questions about Evangeline, led to the blend of reality with the fictional world Longfellow created. Norkumas explores this phenomenon with the works of John Steinbeck's in Monterey, California. In the three sites she explores she noted, "a subtle but forceful blending of reality and fantasy" that could be observed in how markers were chosen to be displayed (Norkumas 1993, 95). While there are actual sites

that were marked, there are also those that had never existed outside of Steinbeck's work. At Grand-Pré, this same blending began during the nineteenth century, but as attention grew during the twentieth century, so did the popularity of Evangeline. In an article of *The Bluenose* Barbara Grantmyre writes about Longfellow's ill-fated lovers: "I think Evangeline and Gabriel still keep tryst in Acadie…as hand in hand they tread the lands of their youth" (Grantmyre 1936, 12). Thus, while the tourist edition of *The Bluenose* from the same year cheekily refer to Evangeline as a fictional woman, there was a continued treatment her as a historical figure. Such a treatment factored into Grantmyre's experience at the site, further saying, "the enchantment of their deathless love puts a sweeter fragrance on the blossom on the ripened fruit." Such blending becomes central to official tourism publication when covering the history of the site.

As tourism information came to be published on an annual basis the narratives surrounding the site became solidified in the public sphere. Due to the regularity of these publications, the stability of the heritage narratives presented to the public can be observed. Though the amount of information being shared about Grand-Pré was at times reduced to a paragraph in reflecting a booklet's brief nature, other publications gave a miniature historical review of featured sites. The 1931 *Nova Scotia Official Tour Book* is one such booklet, giving potential visitors an idea of Grand-Pré's history up to the 1755 Deportation. Although, this publication includes a piece of information that had not been included to this point. The Battle of Grand-Pré and Colonel Arthur Noble were briefly mentioned prior the 1755 Deportation, despite this piece of information not connected to the site through commemorative features. This change came as a response to the Historic Sites and Monuments Board (HSMBC) working towards a bicultural approach to commemoration in the area, as well as the increase of resistance towards Acadian-centric commemoration at Grand-Pré within the local Anglophone community (Gagné 2013, 72). This

rise of a New England Planter, shortened to Planter, heritage was rooted in both HSMBC and local Planter descendants' reactions towards the Acadian focus at Grand-Pré.

The HSMBC was created by the government of Canada in 1919, following an increased interest and concern for preserving and creating historic sites. The board's creation was not only the government's reaction to increased attention to preserving sites, but also to capitalize on the public's interest in visiting these sites (Cole 2017, 1). Thus, HSMBC's involvement at Grand-Pré was both for creating a site that would promote local history in ways that would generate attention and in hopes to balance the commemoration in the area. Gagné says that through this strategy the board, "would be able to appease the Anglophone critics of the park and help ease tensions between French-and English-speaking groups in the area" (Gagné 2013, 72). This tension comes from Grand-Pré being presented in a manner of a community museum, dedicated to an absent Acadian community, when the surrounding population was, and continues to be, predominantly English-speaking. The symbolic reclamation of Grand-Pré through the creation of monuments was feared as an act of 'French domination' by Acadians that was feared across the Maritimes (Gagné 2013, 74). This was not the intended effect, as Fowler and Noel say, "[the Acadians] were more concerned with precipitating solidarity among their own ranks than dominating others" (Fowler and Noel 2017, 55). However, the focus on Acadian history, along with Longfellow's poem, at Grand-Pré was the continued narrative of the site and related tourism advertisements.

The focus on Acadian history and construction of a memorial church was, Gagné writes, "viewed by some members of the local English-speaking community of Grand-Pré as an affront to their own Planter heritage" (Gagné 2013, 70). The 1930s were the beginning of the rise in using Noble and the Battle of Grand-Pré as a counterbalance to the Acadian narratives of the site.

Historians began to publish on the battle, such as MacMechan's *Red Snow on Grand Pré*, elevating Noble to a sort of hero-status, with a characterization as an exceptional military leader and "no ordinary man" (MacMechan 1931, 15-16). HSMBC proposed a second museum for the area, using the home of former Prime Minister Robert Borden, that would focus on Planter heritage to properly resolve the imbalance (Gagné 213, 85-86). While the effort to create a museum did not last, the Battle of Grand-Pré and Noble's defeat were commemorated by a stone cairn with accompanying plaque at a different site, though this would come to be placed along the intersection of Grand Pre and Old Post Road. Though this was not the original placement of the cairn and was moved from its first location to its current placement (Fowler 2011, 3). The plaque reads:

> "Battle of Grand Pre. On 11th of February, 1747, New England troops under Colonel Arthur Noble, were surprised and defeated by French and Indians under Coulon de Villiers, who had made a forced march from Beaubassin in a blinding snowstorm. The British commander was killed and the French leader died later of his wounds."

Despite its placement, the inscription of the plaque angered certain members of the community for highlighting the 'treacherous' nature of the French victory; instead, they called for a remembrance of the area's loyalty to the British King and honour of those killed in 1747 (Gagné 2013, 85). Within the next decade, the narrative of Noble continued to permeate the tourism publications about Grand-Pré, with increased attention on the tragic event.

The Battle of Grand-Pré new importance showed how heritage narratives become rooted in how an event or space is remembered. Smith and Waterton say, "-any single event can be remembered differently and made meaningful or non-meaningful by different individuals and communities" (Smith and Waterton 2009, 45). We can see how this played out at Grand-Pré between Acadians, who hold the memory of the deportation, and Anglophones descended from

Planters, who viewed the battle as a massacre assisted by Acadians. Each group held ideologies that affected how the site and its narratives were understood, and Gagné furthers this by saying, "the elites of both groups attempted to use Grand-Pré and the Grand-Pré National Historic Site to promote their own version of the area's history" Gagné (2013, 72). Acadian elites within the SNA and SMA led the decision on how construction of the memorial church, and later monuments, would be carried out. In comparison, HSMBC and official tourism booklets published by the government of Nova Scotia promoted the Battle of Grand-Pré.

The Minister of Industry and Publicity of Nova Scotia in 1946, the Harold Connolly, authored *The Official Nova Scotia Tour Book*. The entry on Grand-Pré begins with a brief description of the history of the Acadians with an emphasis on Longfellow. This entry goes on to state that Acadians achieved their prosperity following Acadia being ceded to the British in 1710 after the Treaty of Utrecht (Connolly 1946, 21). Therefore, British influence on Acadia is what resulted in the success of the colony, rather than other factors of their existence. This is followed with a substantial portion dedicated to the Battle of Grand-Pré and death of Noble. In his account of the event Connolly notes the death toll, emphasizing the surprise nature of the attack by including that, "30 of [Noble's men] were slain in their beds before they could rise and arm themselves" (1946, 21). As for the survivors, sixty-nine are said to have been captured while, "the remainder fought so bravely that they were permitted to return to Annapolis Royal bearing their arms" (Connolly 1946, 21). Here, the Battle of Grand-Pré is characterised as a matter of English soldiers being ambushed in the middle of the night and nobly fighting back. This was a fitting narrative to satisfy members of the Anglophone community Gagné mentions in his article as being dissatisfied with Noble's plaque which to them seemed to celebrate a treacherous French victory.

As for the Acadians, Connolly does not have as much sympathy stating that "the presence of Col. Noble and his men was reported…by the Acadians" and that "several of them acted as guides for the attacking party" (Connolly 1946, 21). Thus, Connolly equated Acadians to a singular group that fought with the French against the British; and therefore, implies that the Deportation was justified due to this violent resistance. This was only increased in the Nova Scotia Department of Trade and Industry's 1965-66 publication, where the battle was described as, "Perhaps the greatest single incident contributing to the growing British conviction that the Acadians must be expelled" (Department of Trade and Industry 1965-66, 18). Here, the battle is elevated to a major catalyst in the decision to deport the Acadians, who, because of their participation in the battle, had it coming. While this publication says that Acadians acted as guides for de Villiers, it also says, "…others attempted to warn Noble of his peril" (Department of Trade and Industry 1965-66, 18). Thus, we see that there was not a singular focus on Acadians as the 'treacherous' French seen with Connolly, and that it was not an event where Acadians acted as a monolith against the British. By the 1980s, the Battle of Grand-Pré was still being mentioned, be that as it may the Acadian role in French-British conflicts had shifted towards what we will observe when looking at the modern site interpretations. That is, Acadians were characterized as, "[having] steadfastly refused take the prescribed oath of allegiance to the British crown," and that their resistance "sometimes active, sometimes passive…was largely the result of the urgings of certain leaders" (*Nova Scotia Tour Book* 1980, 35-36).

This last publication sees a return to an Acadian who is a neutral, and now who was resistant to British authority due to French Canadian influence. They were again the unwitting victims to French-British imperial conflicts. This illustrates how enduring the heritage narratives first implanted during the nineteenth century following *Evangeline* were to the public. Nevertheless,

Noble and the battle remained as part of the *Nova Scotia Tour Book* through a brief mention of events and the commemorative plaque. Though this plaque is not located on the site and is only featured at the road nearby, it remained relevant to tourism well after Parks Canada's acquisition and official designation in 1955 (Parks Canada, n.d.). This is not the only change that took place at the site following Parks Canada's purchase of Grand-Pré. The name of the site would become the Grand-Pré National Historic Park or Site, and a new wave of development updates came with the change in ownership from DAR to Parks Canada. With this came a new wave of archaeological projects, this time centered predominantly on cultural resource management.

During this early period of Parks Canada's foray into archaeology at the site, not every project was recorded. During the 1950s, excavations were carried out at the site during the installation of a water line connecting to the memorial church. The trench that was dug passed Herbin's Cross, where a wooden plank believed to be associated with part of a coffin was found (Korvemaker 1972, 34). Further excavation of this area appears to not have taken place, though a later examination of the area would be undertaken during the 1980s (Korvemaker 1972, 34). In 1972, Frank Korvemaker completed excavations on two Acadian houses at the Grand-Pré National Historic Site on the opposite side of the treeline from the memorial church, pictured in Figure 7 (marked 8B5 and 8B6). Korvemaker concluded that these houses were constructed in the later part of the Grand-Pré settlement and destroyed following the Deportation (Korvemaker 1972, 27). A depression near Acadian house 2 (8B6) was designated 8B7, though no excavation was completed during this time.

Figure 7*:* Aerial view of Grand Pré National Historic Site illustrating 8B5-7 and the Blacksmith shop. Source: Korvemaker 1972, pg. 54.

As mentioned previously, during the 1980s excavations took place around Herbin's Cross in response to planned conservation. Parks Canada decided to restore and stabilize the stone cross base; Anita Campbell led the project to check for archaeological resources in the vicinity. Campbell had three objectives, the primary being to locate any archaeological remains immediately around the cross, with the other two being the potential to substantiate the Acadian cemetery's location and learning about Acadian burial practices. Four burials were identified, though preservation was poor and remains consisted of coffin stains and nails (Campbell 1982, 3-4). Despite these finds, Campbell states that, "the Acadian occupation surface and any pre-twentieth century English contexts were destroyed by landscaping activities early in the twentieth century." This destruction included any features, Campbell says, "which may have

rested beneath the cross" as they "had been destroyed when the cross was constructed ca. 1909" (Campbell 1982, 7). Discovery of burials around Herbin's Cross verified the original claims made by antiquarians during the nineteenth century that this site was the Acadian cemetery. Even so, this confirmation did not begin an exploration into the location of the Saint-Charles-des-Mines parish church, nor was there continued exploration of the cemetery. Neither the boundaries of the cemetery nor the exact number of graves were determined, as the primary goal was to determine the archaeological potential around the monument to prevent damage during the conservation process.

Parks Canada prioritized the maintenance of the site and its function as a tourism destination. Heritage narratives of the memorial church built above the ruins of the original church continued. That is not to say that every introduced narrative remained part of the site, as the Battle of Grand-Pré became less relevant as HSMBC shifted away from their original idea for the creation of a new site dedicated to New England Planters and Parks Canada interested in focusing on Acadian history and archaeology. A new period of investigation into the site began around twenty years after Campbell's excavations. During the 2000s, GPNHS began a partnership with Saint Mary's University to answer the question of whether the memorial church was in fact built in the place of the original church through an archaeological field school. This field school began a new period, going beyond the initial research question. These brought new interactions with the public that Parks Canada has worked into strategy goals for how they communicate information to the public. However, we will see that even as new information is generated by archaeologists, certain heritage narratives endure.

4. Parks Canada and Modern Archaeology

Heritage Narratives and Parks Canada

In 1997, La Société Promotion Grand-Pré was formed, and their partnership with Parks Canada began in 1998 (LeBlanc 2003, 160). This was not the first time that an Acadian group was involved with the site, as SNA and SMA worked with DAR since 1919, however La Société Promotion Grand-Pré officially co-manages GPNHS with the federal government. This has positioned them as direct decision makers for the site, whereas SMA only had ownership of the memorial church land. Leading up to this co-management, a series of public hearings were held by Parks Canada in 1982 on the topic of a site management (LeBlanc 2003, 154). Concern was raised that Parks Canada had not upheld conditions agreed on within the 1956 contract, primarily that by the 1980s the interior of the memorial church, in acing as a museum, was only half dedicated to Acadian history, with the other half focusing on Planter, Loyalist, and other post-Deportation immigrants to the Annapolis Valley (LeBlanc 2003, 155; Rudin 2009, 213). Coincidentally, this is the decade tourist publications began to reduce the emphasis on the Battle of Grand-Pré, and instead offered an overview of Acadian history, their farming techniques, and peaceful existence prior to the Deportation.

Focus on Acadian history became central to not only these publications, but to the approach to site management and presentation. Three themes were approved for the site after the site management hearings: the evolution of the Acadian community in the Minas area from 1680-1754, the Deportation with a sub-theme of Evangeline and Romantic literature, and the park's genesis in the evolution of twentieth-century Acadian consciousness (LeBlanc 2003, 155; Parks Canada 2012, 11). These themes are Acadian-centric, a focus which had not been seen

previously, reflecting the increased Acadian input. Co-management of the site by Parks Canada and La Société Promotion Grand-Pré, though not the initial goal, allows for a level of control that SNA had not held in their partnership with DAR (Rudin 2009, 213). La Société Promotion Grand-Pré entering co-management with Parks Canada followed renewed Acadian insistence to be involved at Grand-Pré that came after the public hearings (Rudin 2009, 213). It is also an agreement that signals the change in power dynamics at GPNHS, with Acadians becoming part of the group making important decisions at the site. Under this new partnered management at GPNHS, focus shifted away from the Deportation, though it was still a major component of the site. Rudin points to this time between the public hearings and the formation of the Société Promotion Grand-Pré being a shift from a deportation-based identity with "the total absence of events in 1980 to mark the 225 anniversary of the *Grand Dérangement*" being a period of changing community identity (Rudin 2009, 214).[5] Before the 1980s, the anniversary of the Deportation had been marked, most significantly at the bicentenary in 1955 when thousands of Acadians gathered to commemorate the event (Fowler and Noel 2017, 53). The return of significant anniversary events can be tied to the newly solidified identity based on the peasant farmer image of Acadians pre-Deportation.

Another gathering of thousands of Acadians took place in 2005 to mark an anniversary of the Deportation, along with the Acadian World Congress (formally the General Congress of Acadians) in 2004 and other annual cultural events. The relationship between the heritage narrative presented at Grand-Pré and the literary inspiration of Longfellow's poem changed in response to the diminished role Evangeline, both as a literary staple and heroine figure, played in Acadian heritage, as well as the overall focus on pastoral Acadia (Fowler 2017, 55). This is reflected at both the site and in literature aimed at potential visitors. In their *Guide to Historic*

Sites of Canada, National Geographic gives an overview of Grand-Pré's history. They credit Pierre Melanson as the founding member of Grand-Pré, focus on Acadian dyking of the marshlands, and of their refusal to swear allegiance to the British (National Geographic 2017, 26-27). Where the publications of the previous century mentioned Longfellow and the Battle of Grand-Pré, National Geographic instead briefly touches on Herbin's purchase of the site and then both Parks Canada's and UNESCO's designations of the site from 1982 and 2012 respectively. As time went on, Evangeline and Longfellow's poem began to lose their influence over how Acadians viewed their heritage and participated in events; despite this, as Fowler says in response to Evangeline's lessened role amongst Acadians, "the authorized heritage discourse still clings to Longfellow's vision of pre-Deportation Acadia as a lost paradise" (Fowler 2020, 55). We see this in how the site is presented by Parks Canada and La Société Promotion Grand-Pré. Noble, Evangeline, and Longfellow fell, overtly, out of fashion. Instead, a focus on romanticized pre-Deportation Grand-Pré populated by peasant farmers took precedence.

Grand-Pré became imbued with this social meaning of the Acadian diaspora, as many heritage sites have to other groups, to shape and affirm elements of history that align with a constructed view of their identity (Orser 2010, 131; Timoney 2020, 434). This identity is one of a peaceful people, tragically displaced, reclaiming part of their homeland and culture. The depiction of Acadians as peaceful peasant farmers is not new, though this time it was with the help and approval of an Acadian group. Through the funding of La Société Promotion Grand-Pré, the interpretive centre was constructed in 2003 (LeBlanc 2003, 160). Within this centre, there are displays on Acadian history, as well as a theatre in which a short film is shown about the 1755 Deportation. The theatre is built to resemble the inside of a ship which housed the deported Acadians. Right away, the audience is brought into the environment similar to what

Acadians experienced, evoking a sense of re-enactment. Lowenthal writes of re-enactors that they "…seek to retrieve a vanished past" (Lowenthal 2015, 477). Tourists play an inherently reconstructive part in the ways they bring value to a site through their concentration on elements they have deemed significant (Gough 2007, 696). While an audience member may not be actively looking to re-enact the experience of the Deportation, they have a preconception that centers the Deportation as a significant event, and this theatre situates them as part of this event in the place of deported Acadians.

Certain visitors, such as Acadians seeking connection to their ancestry, may view this theatre experience as cathartic, as they in a sense relive their ancestors' tragedy. Little and Shackel argue that, "authentic heritage often is painful history," which is something that can be said about GPNHS having a deliberately designed theatre to replicate the experience of deported Acadians (Little and Shackel 2014, 43). To Acadians, the Deportation remains a point of community remembrance more powerful than any event before 1755, with the tragedy having a national identity placed upon it to a degree where it has become a natural association to both the community and outsiders. The film perpetuates the national identity of homogenous and peaceful Acadians who were victimized by British ambitions reconstructed for an audience. To outsiders, this sense of recreating a part of history that is deserving to be re-enacted, whether that is to keep the history of the tragedy alive or simply to experience the Acadian Deportation for themselves to keep the history from being lost (Lowenthal 2015, 490; Timoney 2020, 432). The contents of the film itself focus on events leading up to the tragedy of the Deportation and its aftermath, with actors speaking directly to the audience in the form of Acadians and British soldiers.

The paintings of Claude Picard in the church and film both promote a narrative of Acadians' peaceful existence being interrupted in 1755 by British soldiers. The film is paired with a series

of six paintings by Claude Picard within the memorial church (Figures 2, 8, and 9 are examples), that depict the stages of Acadian history, from pre-Deportation to the post-Deportation return. Visitors are likely to visit the memorial church after the interpretive centre and view the paintings. The paintings progress from depicting communal farming to a united return, with almost no change in the Acadians' outward appearances. Clothing style, footwear, equipment, hairstyles, and related accessories do not change throughout the images. The unchanging appearance and tools show how the earlier ideas of culture being a uniform boundary between groups that is transmitted without internal change endured into contemporary depictions of Acadians (Feinman and Neitzel 2020, 2). There is a large period between the first and last paintings of the series, which could be used to reflect the change in appearance of returning Acadians, but the culture history that influence the heritage narrative dictate how Acadians are depicted.

These paintings and film, as with many depictions of historical events, were created for their dramatic effect (Lowenthal 2015, 477). Therefore, the lack of change in appearance can be viewed as a symbolic representation of the Acadian people maintaining their culture and identity. Parks Canada seeks to contextualize historical events, and material culture associated with them, through their exhibits rather than simply presenting them to visitors (Hansen and Fowler 2007, 329). At GPNHS, these exhibits are an extension of the romanticized history of the Acadians that continues from the site's earliest operations, only without the overt mentions of Longfellow or Evangeline. Selective representations of the Acadians and Grand-Pré omit the reality of military actions by the British and French to maintain and affirm this vision in the landscape (Fowler 2017, 50; Norkumas 1993, 93). Thus, the heritage narrative of the Acadian peasant farmer remains dominant at GPNHS.

Figure 8*:* “Early Acadia 1635-1755” by Claude Picard. Source: Acadian.org

Figure 9: “Migration and Return 1755-1800” by Claude Picard. Source: Acadian.org

The heritage narrative of Acadian peasant farmers continued into the messaging of visitor-oriented publications, following the designation of the landscape of Grand-Pré as a UNESCO world heritage site in 2012. The designation was not only for GPNHS, but for the entire landscape of reclaimed marshland that UNESCO states, “demonstrates the permanency of its hydraulic drainage system using dykes and aboiteaux,” as well as the agricultural component “through a community-based management system established by the Acadians and then taken over by the Planters and their modern successors” (UNESCO, n.d.). UNESCO also mentions that the landscape is a testimony to “the values of a culture of pioneers able to create their own territory, whilst living in harmony with the native Mi’kmaq people” (UNESCO, n.d.). Thus, we see the narrative of communal farmers who got along with their Indigenous neighbours as significant to the cultural aspect of UNESCO designating the landscape as a world heritage site. The UNESCO description balances geographic components of the landscape, while describing the historical and cultural significance of Grand-Pré. These descriptions include references to twentieth century constructions, the memorial church and Herbin’s Cross, in homage to deported Acadians and archaeological evidence of pre-Deportation villages (UNESCO, n.d.). The archaeological understanding of GPNHS, as with greater pre-Deportation Acadia, have steadily increased since the beginning of the twenty-first century.

A New Era of Archaeology

Saint Mary’s University, Parks Canada, and La Société Promotion Grand-Pré came together to create an archaeological field school at GPNHS run periodically since 2001 (Fowler 2014, 1). The field school has worked to support Parks Canada’s site management plans while carrying out research, primarily investigating whether the nineteenth-century antiquarians were correct in their original identification of the Saint-Charles-des-Mines parish church’s location. Results

from these investigations have raised questions about these long-held beliefs, as the foundation antiquarians labelled as the priest's house, believed to be next to the church, was found to be a domestic Planter site (Fowler and Noel 2017, 55). The parish church itself had remained hidden from researchers, with no evidence produced through excavations, geophysical prospection, or the historical record. To date, Parks Canada has been slow to integrate new archaeological data into either publications or permanent site presentation. Though new evidence was uncovered in the most recent years of field investigations related not only to the parish church, but also to the cemetery boundaries that builds on the confirmation of Campbell made regarding graves in the 1980s during her excavations around Herbin's Cross.

In 2014, the field school continued efforts from its previous season to determine the eastern boundary of the cemetery based on Campbell's work. This was completed through a combination of geophysics and small-scale excavations, which are techniques had been limitedly employed by archaeologists during the 1970s and 1990s, but unsuccessfully (Fowler 2014, 4). In total, 127 artifacts were found during this season, a number that supports a non-occupation interpretation of the site. The artifacts dated from the Terminal Archaic or Early Woodland Period, post-Acadian colonial era, and debris from modern site activity (Fowler 2014, 31). The conclusion of the season found the potential eastern edge of the cemetery, through features that are put forward by Fowler as this boundary and part of Colonel Winslow's 1755 palisade (Fowler 2014, 40). While colonial era and modern artifacts have been found throughout archaeological activities at the site, the pre-contact artifacts, that have an estimated date around 2,600 BP, bring a new component to the archaeological record at Grand-Pré (Fowler 2014, 40-41).

The pre-contact artifacts are interpreted as coming from an Indigenous hunting camp at the eastern elevated area of the site; this camp was occupied during a period where the surrounding

environment was still flooded (Fowler 2014, 41). While Indigenous people are spoken about at Grand-Pré, and in Acadia, it is usually in a post-contact, colonial setting, rather than during pre-colonial periods. Herbin, in his *The History of Grand Pre*, writes that the establishment of Port Royal was the beginning of "the friendly relations that continued so long between the native Indians and the French" Herbin (1911, 22). Along with their relationship to the Acadians, mentions of Indigenous people relegated them to secondary players in colonial history instead of independent agents.

This colonial aspect is true of the nineteenth-through-twentieth-century writings, as can be seen in the works of Herbin, Haliburton, and others; although, the focus in modern years has shifted away from Indigenous peoples as minimal players in European affairs. A particular emphasis of modern publications, and signage at GPNHS, is placed on the friendly and communal relationship between the Mi'kmaq and the Acadian settlers. While it often leads to similar characterizations as seen within Herbin's *History of Grand Pre*, there are new elements of depth given to the relationship that were omitted previously. An article in the March-April 2022 edition of *Archaeology Magazine* writes that the Mi'kmaq held friendly relations with the Acadians "in part because they created their own agricultural land," while also influencing Acadian communal social structures and diet (Weiss 2022, 31, 35). Weiss also says that "there were a significant number of marriages between the groups," something that set them apart from neighbouring New England colonies (Weiss 2022, 31). Despite the Indigenous relationship to Acadians becoming better understood, the educational context of GPNHS favours the European aspects, rather than the mixed relations of both the Acadians and Grand-Pré. Thus, the interpretation of Acadians and Grand-Pré is filtered through the lens of culture history that ignores the complex reality of pre-Deportation Acadian relations (Feinman and Neitzel 2020, 6).

This history most familiar to those visiting the site, with interpretive images and signage not always shifting that perception.

In 2015, the field school, along with continuing the previous year's techniques, took on an educational dimension in the form of interacting with interested visitors (Fowler 2017, 4, 45). As with the 2004 season that saw similar public attention, the field school incorporated the visitors into their activities. Parks Canada supported this; as Fowler says, "staff joined us in the field and integrated the excavation into their regular site tours (Fowler 2017, 45). Visitors took an active role in the site, with public archaeology being a component of the 2015 field season. While this level of communication adds a depth of knowledge that the site, and its related tourism publications, the nature of the field school means it is not a possibility every year. The caveat of public archaeology at GPNHS, as with other Parks Canada sites, is that an archaeological project cannot be solely for tourism. Research questions or concerns of cultural resource management must be central to the work that is being done (Hansen and Fowler 2015, 323). Thus, while public engagement allows for better education of archaeological findings at the site that is separate from the usual narratives presented, the only permanent means of communicating archaeological data is through its incorporation into the site narratives.

During the 2017 through 2019 field seasons no field school took place, with the focus being on geophysical surveying of the site. The results of these surveys were intended to answer the questions the original partnership of the field school set out to answer, namely the location of Saint-Charles-des-Mines parish church. Using a ground-penetrating radar on the formal garden of GPNHS resulted in no evidence of either a large stone foundation or a buried trench where a foundation could have been laid (Fowler 2020, 47). It was concluded that the church did not have a stone foundation as was assumed by antiquarians. Despite the conclusion regarding the church,

the radar survey did allow for the pre-Deportation cemetery to be mapped, with Fowler estimating approximately 289 graves present (Fowler 2020, 50). Though the number of burials may number more than that, as infant graves are not easily identified through geophysical methods. Despite the church not being identified, the cemetery boundaries allow for a narrowed area of interest for searching for the church based on knowledge of Winslow's palisade, which was used to encircle the church and cemetery as a base of operations for the British in Grand-Pré in 1755.

Primary accounts of Winslow's camp, from Winslow himself and his men, detail the construction of the palisade around the church. Winslow wrote on the 22 of August that he had made the church a place of arms and was picketing the camp to "prevent a surprise" from enemy forces (Winslow 1883, 72). On the 30, Winslow ordered the cemetery to be included in this palisade as its second phase. One man, Jerimiah Bancroft, recorded the length and width of the camp as 85 metres by 45 metres (Fowler and Lockerby 2013, 163). Using these points of reference, locating Winslow's camp has become possible by knowing the boundaries of the cemetery which has a width of 45 metres from north to south (Fowler 2020, 48). Under the hypothesis that the two phases of the palisade physically connect to each other, it has been proposed by Fowler that first phase begins at Evangeline's Well and extends to the cemetery (Figure 10) (Fowler 2020, 49). This is supported by the presence of Acadian house structures within the area, as well as a burnt building detected at the center of the phase one camp (Fowler 2020, 48). This building, designated 8B55, was first identified in 2015 through magnetic susceptibility with limited excavation suggesting a large wooden structure had been burnt (Fowler 2020, 2, 4). Interpretation of 8B55 as the likely location of Saint-Charles-des-Mines parish church has not been incorporated by Parks Canada and La Société Promotion Grand-Pré.

Figure 10: Proposed model of Winslow's 1755 camp at Grand-Pré. Source: Fowler 2020, 49.

Archaeology and Heritage Together

Parks Canada states within their 2012 site management plan that the goal of the field school partnership has been to find the parish church, and a plan to collaborate with partners to "improve archaeological knowledge of Acadian, New England Planter and Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia life within the greater Minas Basin area" (Parks 2012, 36). As mentioned previously, there is a lack of incorporation of archaeological data overall into GPNHS, going against their stated objective to "create regularly rotating displays of current historical and archaeological research occurring at [GPNHS] that feature research findings in a prominent location in the visitor centre" (Parks Canada 2012, 26). Certain archaeological finds are displayed at the interpretive centre, such as the preserved piece of an aboiteau found during an earlier season of the field school,

though the majority of finds remain in storage. An aboiteau, or sluice, was part of an Acadian dyke that prevented salt water from returning to a field after draining. The preserved piece was placed on display alongside a reconstructed Acadian farmer within the interpretive centre as a central feature of pre-Deportation Acadia (Hansen and Fowler 2007, 329). While there are other artifacts from the field school on display in the interpretive centre, the aboiteau holds a pride of place in amongst them.

Why does the aboiteau have a central display with an accompanying scale diorama but the data regarding the church and cemetery are largely ignored? Perhaps it is because heritage narratives have equated the memorial church with the original parish church. An example of this is how Parks Canada writes about SNA taking title of the church plot: “At a special ceremony at Grand-Pré during the 1921 Acadian National Convention, the Société mutuelle de l'Assomption took official title to the church site” (Parks Canada 2020). Here, we see the memorial church site being referred to as the church site, with another webpage dedicated to the memorial church saying, “archaeological excavations in 2001 suggest the Memorial Church was indeed built approximately where the original Grand-Pré parish church stood” (Parks Canada 2022). This takes archaeological data into account, yet it does not acknowledge new data that suggests the memorial church is not where the original church stood. The lack of acknowledgement may come from a desire to remain authentic to visitors, as heritage is often equated with authenticity (Little and Shackel 2014, 42). Much of the professional writing on Parks Canada sites by archaeologists remain unavailable to the public, thus not mentioning new data that gives a potential location of the church within the formal garden through their webpage further distances the public from the information (Hansen and Fowler 2007, 337). This can be extended to the absence of changes in site signage and how the memorial church presented. While changing how

the entire site presents this information is requires funds and preparation, Parks Canada could begin incorporating the archaeology into the heritage by acknowledging specific results when discussing the archaeological projects.

The heritage narratives of Grand-Pré, that of the idyllic, rural, and peaceful Acadian homeland have been attached to the site since the twentieth century. The highly romanticized heritage has an emotional element, one that is experienced by visitors and facilitated through performances of heritage (Smith and Waterton 2009, 49). The memorial church, with its paintings and limited artifacts, serves as a re-constructed piece of this idealized past visitors can experience along with the aboiteau, film and packaged landscape. Thus, changing the narrative of the church to incorporate new data pointing to the archaeological finding goes against the heritage that generations have held as true. As Fowler said, "the Longfellow tradition cast the French inhabitants as hobbits and Grand-Pré as their shire;" and while Nova Scotia is not New Zealand, the simple Acadian farmer is a long-held, comfortable trope (Fowler 2017, 55). Even as *Archaeology Magazine* focuses an article on the archaeology of GPNHS, including the likely site of the parish church, the article is entitled *Paradise Lost* which invokes a dramatic image of a lost Eden. Expectations of the site are reinforced through these types of heritage narratives on which visitors base their perception of GPNHS.

Parks Canada states that archaeological data found at, and around the site, will be "understood, preserved, and presented in ways that respond to visitor interests" (Parks Canada 2012, 18). Much like how Bruner notes for most visitors to the New Salem site, tourists at GPNHS have preconceived notions of who the Acadians are and what Grand-Pré was historically (Bruner 2005, 129). Parks Canada makes the statement in its management plan that they "will satisfy the expectations" of visitors through tailoring experiences to fit the heritage

(Parks Canada 2012, 18). Fulfilling these expectations requires maintaining the idealized heritage with minimum changes, which contradicts the objective to incorporate new archaeological data into exhibits. It is easier for Parks Canada to maintain current exhibits than to change such long held ideas of what is represented at the GPHNS. It is expected that an institution such as Parks Canada would take time to incorporate new information into a site due to internal processes.

The discovery of cemetery boundaries and a potential location of the parish church through geophysical surveys aligns with stated goals by Parks Canada, with the site management plan stating that the research has "contributed significantly to the understanding of the site" (Parks Canada 2012, 36). Despite this, Parks Canada does not incorporate this valued information into GPNHS to contribute to visitors' understanding. This is possibly due to the desire to continue the popular understanding of the site in the wake of new information threatening the mythologized nature of GPNHS (Bruner 2005, 131). As Campbell says, "public history generally requires both a positive story and a clear-cut message," both of which can be found within the heritage narratives of GPNHS (Campbell 2017, 69). This positive story and clear-cut message come in the form of the resilient Acadian people returning to their homeland and its symbolic reclamation through reconstructing the parish church where it once stood, uncomplicated by the archaeological data related to the church's actual location.

2022 is both the tenth anniversary of the UNESCO designation of the landscape of Grand-Pré and one hundredth anniversary of the memorial church's construction. These occasions are the perfect opportunity for the archaeological data to be added to the present interpretation of GPNHS, bringing a balance to the heritage that presently dominates. As of this thesis, the Fédération Acadienne have created a documentary in partnership with Dr. Jonathan Fowler about

the archaeology at GPNHS and the project relating to the search for the parish church (FANE 2022). Yet, Parks Canada has not taken the information available to them to communicate this information for themselves. One hundred years after the construction of the memorial church, and two hundred and sixty-seven years after the Deportation, the location of Saint-Charles-des-Mines parish church could once again be known to the public, enriching the heritage and history of the site through the efforts of archaeologists. This can be accomplished through Parks Canada, and other museum institutions with an archaeological basis, incorporating new data into their exhibits and informational material as they become available. Until institutions begin to incorporate more balanced amounts of archaeology, we will continue to see heritage dominating the relationship in how historic sites are interpreted and viewed.

Conclusion

Heritage narratives have a strong influence over what parts of history and archaeology become accepted by the public. This in turn guides how historic sites, such as GPNHS, decide what information is prioritized in the narrative being communicated. This has been seen through an analysis of GPNHS's development since the nineteenth century. GPNHS, like many other historic sites, has a historical connection that goes beyond the first wave of its development. These sites become infused with how history about the place, people, and events associated with them have been recorded. The politics of interest groups, majority and minority, have governed which parts of history are represented and prioritized by not only broader heritage discourse but also by the heritage narratives retained at historic sites.

Prioritized at GPNHS since the nineteenth century has been the pre-Deportation Acadian period, though how this has been expressed varied. During the nineteenth century heritage narratives about Grand-Pré were intrinsically tied to Longfellow's prosperous Acadia of *Evangeline*. Archaeology of this period saw interpretation of artifacts through the lens of Longfellow. Tools from "Evangeline's Well" were said to have belonged to Basil the Blacksmith, a pair of stone foundations were associated with the priest's house and parish church, and exhumed coffins were displayed so that visitors could view traces of Grand-Pré's remaining Acadian population. In the twentieth century, archaeology was not a factor until Parks Canada's purchase of the site in the 1950s, though this was in service of on-site construction. Heritage became contested during this period: the dominant narrative of peaceful Acadians was paired with the 1747 Battle of Grand-Pré. While the Battle of Grand-Pré did not remain in the narratives after the twentieth century, its inclusion illustrates how politics surrounding public memory influence heritage narratives. Today, the narratives of peaceful Acadian farmers remain

the largely the same. Evangeline as the central figure of the site has diminished, nevertheless Longfellow’s lost paradise of pre-Deportation Acadia continues to dominate. Archaeological findings, which include the militarized nature of the community, are cherrypicked for what fits into the established narrative (Fowler 2017, 55). This has resulted in data indicating the location of the parish church in the landscape, a priority of the partnership between Parks Canada and archaeologists, being ignored in terms of presentation.

The presentation of established heritage narratives over new data is not surprising. It is easier for Parks Canada to maintain their exhibits and messaging than to change them. Parks Canada’s site management plan for GPNHS shows the desire to incorporate archaeology and history about Grand-Pré and the Acadians. This is balanced with their objective to present Acadian history and culture at the site in partnership with La Société Promotion Grand-Pré. This presentation favours the history of pre-Deportation Acadia that highlights the communal peasant lifestyle and tragic nature of the Deportation attributed to the Acadians. These attributes are not limited to GPNHS but can be observed in how the pre-Deportation Acadian period is the focus of both history and archaeology. The resettlement period, where Acadians returned to the Canadian Maritime provinces in the 1760s, and after are not given the same attention by historic sites or archaeologists (Fowler and Noel 2017, 55). We can see that the narratives of pre-Deportation Acadia have permeated beyond Grand-Pré.

The aim of this thesis has been to illustrate the relationship between archaeology and heritage at a specific historic site, and how heritage comes to dominate this relationship. Through this thesis I have illustrated how heritage has been dominating how a historic site develops over time. I have also hoped to show how both archaeology and heritage have a place at a historic site. GPNHS is not unique in this heritage-dominated relationship. Other Parks Canada sites, such as

the Fortress of Louisbourg, prioritize certain historic peoples and periods, dictating how archaeological projects are carried out at the specific site. Prioritizing certain historical aspects or narratives of a site is not limited to Parks Canada. In Greece, the Parthenon stands as a visual representation of the Athenian Golden Age of the fifth century that created democracy as we know it today. The shared Western narrative of democracy and its virtues has led to the erasure of the Parthenon's history, such as its use as a church and mosque, through excavations as they do not fit into the shared heritage of what narratives surround modern democracy (Beard 2003, 68, 118, 121). Similarly in Northern Ireland, the past is constantly reworked to fit into modern political and heritage narratives that erase the plurality of historic sites, such as Dunluce Castle (Mullan 2021, 252). In understanding how archaeology and heritage at GPNHS has developed over time, it is possible to track how heritage becomes emphasized at the expense of nuanced interpretations at other sites. It is also possible to see how heritage, whether that be the at the national or community level, at future historic sites may overpower the historical and archaeological record.

Archaeology, it has been argued is "used to provide a fixed set of reference points" where there was formerly negotiation to creative narratives of identity and heritage (Jones 1997, 138). Archaeologists can not control how the information they generate is used by interest groups, but they can face how it has been used to construct certain narratives that have dominated sites. Archaeologists, such as the team from Saint Mary's University, continue to be open to working with Parks Canada and other historic sites to incorporate more archaeological data into exhibits, signage, and messaging. The ball is now in Parks Canada's, and other museum institutions', court to take them up and bring a balance to the relationship between archaeology and heritage. Accepted heritage narratives can be unsettled through archaeology uncovering evidence of

history that goes against the dominant narratives, and there is now an opportunity for such an unsettling at GPNHS (Mullan 202, 251-252). As mentioned previously, this year marks the tenth year since the UNESCO designation and one hundredth year since the construction of the memorial church. This is the opportune year for Parks Canada to bridge the gap between heritage and archaeology at GPNHS, such as announce the outcome of the archaeological projects from the past twenty years, create an updated site management plan, and create events surrounding the potential location of the church. We, as visitors, should take this opportunity to reflect on how heritage has dominated the communication of history.

Notes

[1] "Before throwing the stone too hard at those who organized the event," translated by the author.
[2] "The honor of our race has given us the duty to energetically protest, in good French, to the responsible authorities," translated by the author.
[3] Canada's Ocean Playground, 1920s, F91 N85 N85, Nova Scotia Archives.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Acadian term for the Deportation.

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