

Working Relations in Southeastern Cape Breton Acadian Communities, 1767-1820

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### Abstract

The story of the Acadians in Nova Scotia is one of self-reliance, devastation, and working relations. The research surrounding the Acadians has focused primarily on their ability to form a unique identity that separated them from other European populations and the Grand Dérangement that saw the British forcibly remove the Acadians from their communities. Due to this displacement, the common belief beyond academia has been that the Acadians and British were always enemies. In an attempt to expand the historical knowledge surrounding the Acadians, this thesis focuses on the adaptability of the Acadian population in southeastern Cape Breton and how they were able to diversify communities and economies. The success of the cod industry and the ability of the Acadians to exploit it, meant that their communities evolved into hubs for British and other European settlers and businesses. The Acadians managed to adapt and form working relations with their neighbours for the betterment of all.

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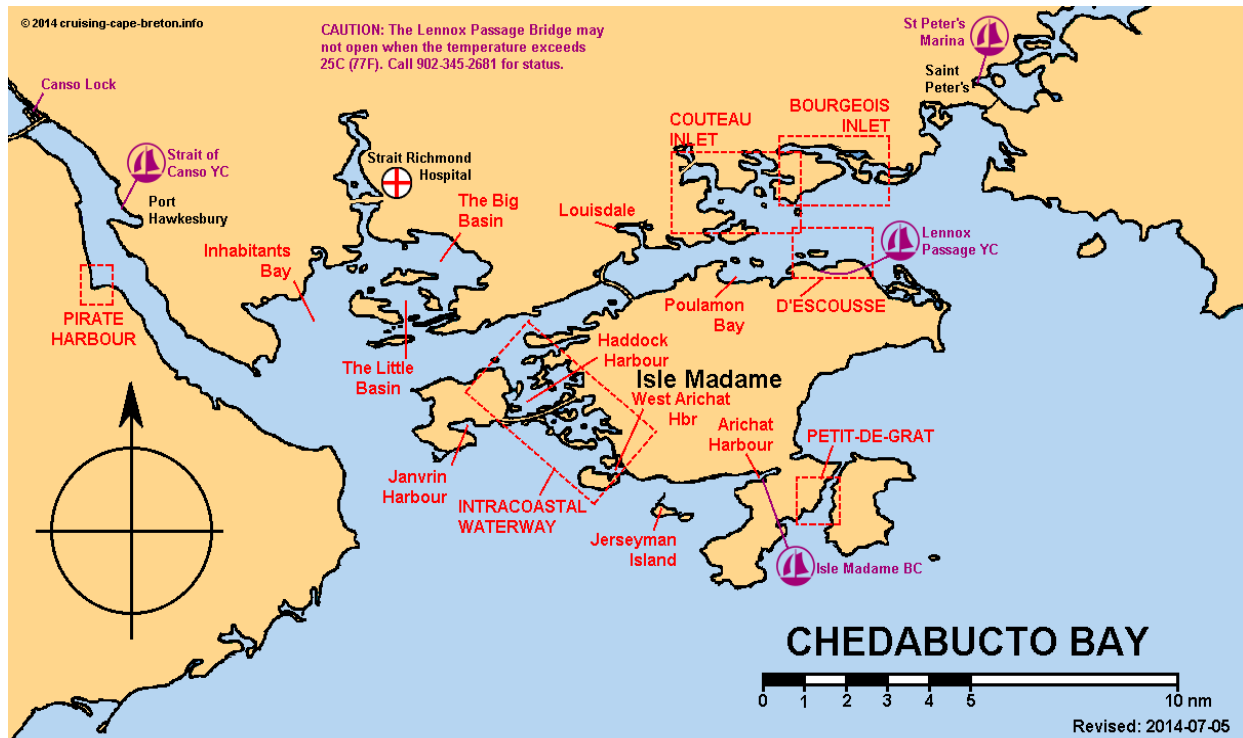
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## **Chapter One**

Acadian history has been extensively researched by many scholars. The uniqueness of the Acadians and their trials and tribulations in Nova Scotia offers numerous discussion points. Though scholars have produced various studies, there has been a tendency to focus on the unique identity of the Acadians and their bitter relationship with the British that led to their life-altering expulsion in 1755. Although the academic sources on these subjects are plentiful, there are two important topics that have managed to elude the research community. The first is linked with the common, non-academic perception of the long-term and pervasive antagonism between the Acadians and British and the belief that they have never had working relations. Despite their obvious tensions that did exist, there is also evidence to suggest that they lived peacefully with the British. The second is the neglected academic material and focused research that explores the Acadian population who established themselves on Cape Breton Island.

This thesis will focus on the Acadians of southeastern Cape Breton between 1767 and 1820 and will consider how they established working relations with the British settlers who migrated into their communities.



(Image attributed to Colin Jackson, "A chartlet of Chedabucto Bay, Lennox Passage and the Isle Madame area of Nova Scotia, Canada," (July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014). This map illustrates the southeastern region of Cape Breton Island.)

For the purpose of this thesis the definition of British settlers will include those from Wales, Scotland, Ireland, England and the English Channel Island of Jersey. Despite their only having been established in 1835, the boundaries of Richmond County will be used to guide the area of investigation. This thesis points to the need for further research to understand more about the complex relationship that emerged between Acadian and British people in Cape Breton. In doing so, this project builds a stronger understanding of the scope of Acadian history. In many ways, this thesis acts as a starting point for future researchers considering the Acadians of Nova Scotia.

In the present-day Maritime Provinces, the Acadians have a longstanding and intriguing history since their early arrival in 1605. Although previous attempts to establish a permanent settlement in the maritime region of North America were considered failures, the Acadians were able to overcome the challenges presented and contributed to the successful establishment of Port Royal in the late seventeenth century. Since their early beginnings in Acadia, the Acadians

displayed their adaptiveness by managing their new surroundings to their benefit. Through this, the Acadians established farming communities and, for the most part, working relations with the local Mi'kmaq. Focusing on the nineteenth-century, historian Francis Parkman, characterized the Acadians as a "poverty-stricken people who had the social equality which can only exist in the humblest conditions of society."<sup>1</sup> The success of the early Acadian communities could be attributed to their working relations with the local Mi'kmaq. However, despite their attempts of maintaining a relatively isolated lifestyle, the Acadians often fell victim to the constant power struggles that characterized European interest in the region. The bitter rivalry between Britain and France resulted in numerous conflicts that were played out in many places including Nova Scotia and the Acadians felt the effects. As the British once again conquered Port Royal in 1710, Acadie was ultimately ceded to Great Britain following the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713.

In 1713, the terms of the British conquest of Nova Scotia were officially recorded in the Treaty of Utrecht and l'Acadie, which was a French-claimed territory, was transferred in European perception to the British. However, the French retained their colonies of Île Saint-Jean (Prince Edward Island) and Île Royale (Cape Breton). This transition of power put into question the future existence of the Acadian people in their homeland. The Acadians were a French-speaking population, residing within English territory, but resisted any clear allegiance to either power. For more than 150 years, living a separate existence from the French and British, with the majority of the Acadians leaned towards neutrality. Despite their continued emphasis on a neutral position, there were multiple attempts by the British to force the Acadians into signing oaths of allegiances, prior to 1755. Two of the earliest forms of oaths being forced upon them happened in 1654 and 1690. Due to the strong religious factors involved with signing or taking an oath, this task was not

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<sup>1</sup> Francis Parkman, *A Half-Century of Conflict*, taken from Naomi Griffiths, *The Acadians: Creation of a People*, (1973); 16.

something one took lightly. Due to the religious factor, Yves Durand explains “The Oath, is therefore not a simple contract one can easily renounce; it is an engagement before god.”<sup>2</sup> The initial attempt was in 1654, when a group of New Englanders from Boston made a nighttime raid on the Acadians along the south shore of Acadia. The New Englanders obliged all the Acadians they came across to sign a document that made clear that they would not bear arms against the British.<sup>3</sup> The second example of the British forcing an oath-like agreement upon the Acadians came in 1690, when William Phips attacked Port Royal. With fears of becoming prisoners of war and having their homes destroyed, the local Acadian population was compelled to take an oath of allegiance to William of Orange and Queen Mary of England.<sup>4</sup>

With the growing Acadian population, the transition of control of Acadia, and the subsequent events and conflicts that plagued the Acadian population, they were no longer able to reside peacefully in their communities. The paranoia and fear of an Acadian uprising caused the British to harass them and to constantly doubt their loyalty. The British were often undecided and divided on proper measures to enforce in order to address these concerns. The ongoing tension between the British and Acadians reached a point of no return when, in 1755, the Governor of Nova Scotia, Charles Lawrence, ordered the arrest and deportation of the Acadian people. This painful phase of removal and detention was the Grand Dérangement. The Acadians were dispersed all across the globe. During the initial removal phase, the Acadians were sent to British North American territories, ranging from Massachusetts to Georgia.<sup>5</sup> At the conclusion of the deportation, the Acadians were sent all over North America and Europe. Many of the Acadians

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<sup>2</sup> A.J.B Johnston, “Borderland Worries: Loyalty Oaths in Acadie/Nova Scotia, 1654-1755,” *French Colonial History* Vol. 4, (2003); 35.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 36.

<sup>5</sup> Naomi Griffiths, *The Contexts of Acadian History*, 97.

who were deported fell victim to in far-ranging voyages, even further than their British counterparts who removed them could have imagined.<sup>6</sup> For example, a number of the Acadians sent to Maryland, South Carolina, and Georgia, continued on to Santo Domingo; with some venturing further to Louisiana or British Honduras.<sup>7</sup> Some of the Acadians left their destinations and ventured to Saint Pierre and Miquelon, and the Channel Island. Finally, many who were sent to Virginia were then moved on to England and then to France. Many of these individuals would ultimately leave from Nantes, France, in 1785 for Louisiana, a Spanish territory.<sup>8</sup>

The Grand Dérangement was one of the most significant events in the history of northeastern North America and has become a popular topic of research. This decision was not an impromptu act by the British as significant evidence suggests. In 2006, John Mack Faragher published *A Great and Noble Scheme: The Tragic Story of the Expulsion of the French Acadians from their Homeland* wherein he outlines how this was organized and planned well in advance of its execution.<sup>9</sup> Faragher's book has emerged as a must-read for anyone who is interested in learning about the history of the Acadians and the unjust events that altered their history forever. The historian Geoffrey Plank praised Faragher for his contribution to Acadian history and for the contribution that this book offers to the history of North America. Plank states that "Faragher has done us a service by encouraging us to consider the role of ethnic cleansing in the history of North America."<sup>10</sup> He further compliments him for his unwavering approach of condemning those individuals responsible for the decision to expel the Acadians. Plank notes that, "Few scholars in

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid, 100.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 100.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 100.

<sup>9</sup>John Mack Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme: The Tragic Story of the Expulsion of the French Acadians from their Homeland*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2006).

<sup>10</sup> Geoffrey Plank, "A Great and Noble Scheme: The Tragic Story of the Expulsion of the French Acadians from Their American Homeland" by John Mack Faragher (Review), *The American Historical Review* vol. 111, no. 2 (April 2006); pg. 459-460.



the twentieth century have gone so far as to applaud the British, but by analyzing the decision as a legal action or as an unfortunate military expedient, historians too often have taken the objectives of the leaders of the British Empire for granted.”<sup>11</sup> Plank further applauds Faragher for his stance that “there was nothing inevitable about the expulsion, and Faragher rightly passes judgment against the decision makers.”<sup>12</sup> Further praise for Faragher’s work followed with Joseph Anthony Amato stating that this book “constitutes a singular, indispensable, and classic introduction to tragic Acadian history” and similarly to Plank, Amato praises Faragher for his informative chapters which trace the “development of expulsion plan and scheme during the four decades after the Treaty of Utrecht (1713).”<sup>13</sup> Gordon T. Stewart also reinforces the claim that the British had this plan of expulsion well thought out in advance to its execution by observing that “the violence was legitimized by the ethnic stereotyping and devaluation that had evolved over many decades.”<sup>14</sup>

The emergence of Acadian communities in Cape Breton can partially be attributed to outcomes of the conditions agreed upon in the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. Due to the uncertain future that the Acadians faced in Nova Scotia, some Acadians left their lands and relocated to the French-controlled Cape Breton. They migrated primarily to coastal spaces where they set up communities such as Cheticamp and Port Toulouse (St. Peter’s). They had migrated to places that were unfamiliar to them and, as with their emergence in Nova Scotia, they had to adapt. Despite the Acadians initial success with the cod fishery, some of the Acadian fishers were forcibly

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 460.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Joseph Anthony Amato, “A Great and Noble Scheme: The Tragic Story of the Expulsion of the French Acadians from Their American Homeland” by John Mack Faragher (Review), *Journal of Social History* vol. 39, no. 4 (Summer 2006); 1247-1248.

<sup>14</sup> Gordon T. Stewart, “A Great and Noble Scheme: The Tragic Story of the Expulsion of the French Acadians from Their American Homeland” by John Mack Faragher (Review), *The Journal of American History* vol. 93, no. 3 (December 2006); 823-824.

removed from Cape Breton during the Grand Dérangement.<sup>15</sup> Upon their return to Cape Breton in the 1760s, they relied upon cod fishing and this played a major role in how they structured their communities. Success in the cod fishery provided their families with stability and built up the economy of Cape Breton; it also drew attention from other European countries and led to immigration and new settlement in and around pre-existing Acadian communities. As a result, Acadian communities evolved and the populations diversified, to include Acadians, British, Scottish, Irish, and American Loyalist settlers. Understanding the lifestyles of the Acadians in Cape Breton helps us to see where Acadians and British interactions occurred and what they looked like. For these communities to be evolving and working societies, the Acadians and British settlers had to interact with one another. Examining this topic will contribute to the overall understanding of Acadian and British relations and further understanding of the complex history of the Acadian population in Cape Breton.

This research will use both primary and secondary sources through an interdisciplinary approach. When studying a specific people, their past, their identity, and their social and economic histories, one has to consider several broadening the scope of research into fields within the history umbrella, which will provide better well-rounded results and offer a more complete history. For this particular thesis, the research will use land petition records, census records, militia records, and government documentation. The use of land petitions records and census records from collections at the Nova Scotia Archives are invaluable resources that enabled a clearer illustration of the working relations within these communities. These documents contribute firsthand accounts of individuals asking for grants or leases on property in various communities in Cape Breton. These provide insight into prior knowledge of their neighbours that they are requesting to move

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<sup>15</sup> Stephen J. Hornsby, *Nineteenth-Century Cape Breton: A Historical Geography*, (Canada: McGill-Queens Press, 1992); 4.

near, and the maps of their land also offer a visual representation of the close proximity that these individuals were living. Two primary documents that were consulted and presented unique outlooks of the region were the published observations of Thomas Pichon, a Frenchman working for the British who travelled Cape Breton in 1758 to record his impressions and potential for the British Crown and the documented recordings of the French explorer, Nicolas Denys.<sup>16</sup> These records are some of the earliest recordings of the island and offer a historic firsthand account and impression of the landscape and some of the first impressions of the island were.

The research surrounding the Acadians and British establishing working relations is still relatively sparse and as a result, some limitations need to be acknowledged as having affected the research process. The first limitation was the primary sources. The Nova Scotia Archives has a strong base of available resources that have been useful for this thesis. However, documentation of marriages, deaths, births, and business records are hard to locate for this period and region. Some of the resources that contain this information are located in European archives or are in collections at the National Archives of Canada. Due to travel restrictions and cost limitations, these were not able to be examined firsthand. Secondly, the Acadians are French-speaking people. Thus, some of the primary documentation available is written in French and I do not speak French. I do have readily available resources, such as bilingual family members, who have helped me understand documents that were written in French. However, this process was not the most efficient, so limited use of French documents was made during the research process.

Two primary documentations that were consulted for this thesis are from the Nova Scotia Archives and they were census records from various dates of Cape Breton and the Cape Breton

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<sup>16</sup> Thomas Pichon, *Genuine Letters and Memoirs, relating to the natural, civil, and commercial history of the islands of Cape Breton, and Saint John, from the first settlement there, to .. 1758*, (London, 1760) and Nicolas Denys, *The Description and Natural History of the Coasts of North America (Acadia)*, translated by William Francis Ganong (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1908).

Island Land petitions. These census records provided an overview of the general ethnic make-up of the island during the time being studied. Within this collection, there were also some individual community tax return papers that list the individual heads of households in a particular community. This information was beneficial as it states names of those in the communities, which allows for the understanding of how many British, Acadian, and other members resided there. The Cape Breton Island Land Petitions database contained information that was extremely useful for this thesis. Within this collection, a letter of request for land is provided from the individual asking. Also, the majority of these requests had a map connected to them that displays the land they were requesting and who their neighbouring counterparts were. While consulting the letter of request, it became apparent that certain individuals were aware of those residing near or next to their requested property. For example, a British settler may have requested land that was attached to an Acadian individual's property. This information was important because it proved that there was prior knowledge of proximity and a desire to follow through with the request of adjacent land. In some cases, the maps display multiple properties in the area which allows a more complete depiction of the community.

The militia records were also important because they offer information regarding the structuring of these communities. While listing the captains of these militia units and those who were capable of bearing arms within these divisions, it lists all the men in the community, their occupation, age, and place of birth. This information was significant to exhibit how these communities were becoming diverse and how British and Acadian settlers were living amongst one another in these small communities. Although these records are crucial to the research, they unfortunately only display the men of the community. Once again, there was no record of the women, spouses, or marriage information between these two parties.

The secondary literature regarding the Acadians is limited. This is not to downplay the significant contributions that many scholars have dedicated to this field, but rather to flag that we need extended understandings of Acadian history and that many areas have yet to be considered. The topics surrounding the Acadians that are primarily discussed focus on their unique identity, their early establishment in Nova Scotia, and the Grand Dérangement. Although there has been a serious neglect of the Acadians on Cape Breton and their relationship with the British, the available scholarship provides a useful start. Andrew Hill-Clark published a comprehensive history of the Acadians in Nova Scotia, titled *Acadia: The Geography of Early Nova Scotia to 1760*.<sup>17</sup> Clark's book provides an extensive overall history of the Acadians in Nova Scotia. Through the use of primary sources, Clark focuses on the cultural, societal, economical, and political changes that the Acadians faced during their time in settling Nova Scotia. Clark details the emergence of the Acadians, how they were able to survive and adapt to this foreign land, and what led to their unfortunate removal from their homes in the mid-1750s. Clark's book is a strong starting point for scholars to get an understanding of the Acadians and their background.

The English-language scholar most synonymous with Acadian history in Atlantic Canada is Naomi Griffiths. The catalogue of Griffiths includes numerous books and journal articles focusing primarily on the Acadians' unique and separate identity from their fellow British and French settlers. Throughout Griffiths' scholarship she maintains consistency that the Acadians were an established people who had a separate identity and culture despite constant confusion of land transfers between the British and the French. This was the main discussion and argument in her 1973 book, *The Acadians: Creation of a People*.<sup>18</sup> Griffiths followed this publication with *The*

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<sup>17</sup> Andrew Hill-Clark, *Acadia: The Geography of Early Nova Scotia to 1760* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1968).

<sup>18</sup> Naomi E.S. Griffiths, *The Acadians: Creation of a People*. (Canada: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1973).

*Contexts of Acadian History 1686-1784*, which discussed the emergence of their identity as being separate from others in the region and how this was used to their advantage.<sup>19</sup> Griffiths states that the Acadians were able to establish relations with other ethnicities, most prominently the Mi'kmaq, due to their 'border people' lifestyle and identity. Being 'border people' meant that they were individuals living between other groups of people and not having any allegiances. In the case of the Acadians, they were living amongst the French, British, and the Mi'kmaq. With the ever-expanding population in Cape Breton, the ability to form relations was integral for the survival of all groups. As history has shown, the Acadians were able to establish relations with others due to them maintaining their own identity. Griffiths reinforces these claims in her book *From Migrant to Acadian: A North American Border People, 1604-1755*, wherein she discusses these similar aspects of Acadian history and ultimately how their choice of maintaining their own identity and failure to pledge allegiance to the British led to their deportation from Nova Scotia in 1755.<sup>20</sup>

Andrew Hill-Clark, Naomi Griffiths and John Mack Faragher offer an excellent starting point for scholars interested in the Acadians in Nova Scotia. Sally Ross and Alphonse Deveau also provided an informative book titled *The Acadians of Nova Scotia: Past and Present*<sup>21</sup> focusing on the overall study of the Acadians in the region from the beginning of the French settlements to present day Nova Scotia. Ross and Deveau also provide information regarding the Acadians in Isle Madame, which is often overlooked when it comes to exploring Acadian history.

John Reid, who has produced some works that look at the Acadians, is a good example since his research focuses on Northeastern North America as a whole. Contained within his large

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<sup>19</sup> Naomi E.S. Griffiths, *The Contexts of Acadian History, 1686-1784*, (Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992).

<sup>20</sup> Naomi Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian: A North American Border People, 1604-1755*, (Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005).

<sup>21</sup> Sally Ross and Alphonse Deveau, *The Acadians of Nova Scotia: Past and Present*, (Halifax: Nimbus Publishing, 1992).

and extensive catalogue of publications is *Six Crucial Decades: Times of Change in the History of the Maritimes* wherein Reid claims that one of the most crucial decades within Nova Scotia was the decade of the 1750s, the Decade of Expulsion.<sup>22</sup> The expulsion of the Acadians is one of the largest events in Maritime history. Finally, Brenda Dunn's book *A History of Port Royal/Annapolis Royal, 1605-1800* provides an overview of the original settlement of the French and the early Acadians.<sup>23</sup> It also discusses various events, social changes, and factors that altered this community, and the Acadians lives in what was then Acadia.

All of this analysis is important to the overall understanding of the Acadians' past in Nova Scotia but, aside from a small recognition of a large Acadian population within Isle Madame, the Acadians in Cape Breton tend to be overlooked. Unfortunately, this oversight is common in many publications. In Robert LeBlanc's article "The Acadian Migrations," he provided useful insight into the different waves of migration by the Acadians following their Expulsion in 1755 and he argues that the Acadian population was often times attempting to find a permanent home following their forced removal from their homeland and that the Maritime region was the only destination suitable for them since they were under constant scrutiny by or received hostile receptions from other American colonies.<sup>24</sup> Terrence Murphy, whose article "The Emergence of Maritime Catholicism, 1781-1830" discussed the rise of Catholic Loyalists to the Maritimes, considered these movements as pivotal to the increasing population of Cape Breton and that Isle Madame was a centre point of the Catholic settlement.<sup>25</sup> The works of these two scholars focus on topics that had an impact on the Acadian population both in Nova Scotia and elsewhere, but the neglect of Cape Breton and the effects there were evident in these as well.

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<sup>22</sup> John G. Reid, *Six Crucial Decades*.

<sup>23</sup> Brenda Dunn, *A History of Port Royal/Annapolis Royal, 1605-1800*, (Halifax: Nimbus Publishing, 2004).

<sup>24</sup> Robert LeBlanc, "The Acadian Migrations." *Cahiers de géographie du Québec* 1124 (1967).

<sup>25</sup> Terrence Murphy, "The Emergence of Maritime Catholicism, 1781-1830" *Acadiensis*, XIII:II (1984); 31.

Retaining the control of Cape Breton and Prince Edward Island (PEI) by the French following the Treaty of Utrecht gave the Acadians two colonies to reside within that still allowed them a degree of stability within a French imperial framework. Despite the lack of focus on the Cape Breton Acadians, there have been some scholars who have dedicated research to the Acadian population residing on Prince Edward Island, including Georges Arsenault's book *The Island Acadians, 1720-1980*.<sup>26</sup> Similar to the focus of Nova Scotia Acadians, much of the Prince Edward Island scholarship focuses on the oath of allegiance and the deportation those individuals faced. Earle Lockerby's *Deportation of the Prince Edward Island Acadians* which offers a brief historical overview of the Acadian population on PEI and how they suffered a similar fate to their counterparts in Nova Scotia in that the vast majority were ultimately deported.<sup>27</sup> Additionally, his article "Prince Edward Island Acadians in the 1760s and beyond, and their Ambivalence in Taking the Oath of Allegiance," discusses the difficulty of the Acadians on Prince Edward Island to maneuver around the struggles of allegiance and how they suffered and adapted to the changes that were taking place there.<sup>28</sup> Lockerby claims that while the power was in the French control, the Acadians on PEI swore their oath to France. However, as the British took control, they were beginning to alter their stance and support the British.<sup>29</sup> As he notes, for subjects to be employed in British territories, they had to be loyal to the crown.<sup>30</sup> Thus, the Acadian population on PEI was able to gain employment from British and New England entrepreneurs.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Georges Arsenault, *Island Acadians, 1720-1980* (Charlottetown: Ragweed Press, 1989).

<sup>27</sup> Earle Lockerby, *Deportation of the Prince Edward Island Acadians*, (Halifax: Nimbus Publishing, 2008).

<sup>28</sup> Earle Lockerby, "Prince Edward Island Acadians in the 1760s and Beyond, and their Ambivalence in Taking the Oath of Allegiance," *Acadiensis* 47;2 (Summer, 2018).

<sup>29</sup> Lockerby, "Prince Edward Island Acadians," 77.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*, 77.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid*, 89.



As a result of the deportation, many of the Atlantic region's Acadians, as well as some of the Cape Breton Acadians, were relocated to other British or French colonies to be controlled and monitored. One of the regions that saw a large influx of Acadian refugees was Louisiana. It was here that, once again, they were able to adapt to their surroundings and form a new identity for themselves. Similar to their ancestors in L'Acadie, these deported Acadians built their identity by forming relationships with other local populations, and in turn, they became known as Cajuns. Contributing to the extensive research available on the Acadians, the historiography also connects to the scholarship focusing on the Cajuns, which is also extensive. Perhaps the largest contributor to the research regarding the Cajun population in Louisiana has been Carl. A. Brasseaux. Throughout his career, Brasseaux has researched extensively French Colonial North America with a specific focus on the Cajun people of Louisiana.<sup>32</sup> He has published numerous scholarly articles and books regarding this topic which has in turn contributed to further understanding the history of the Acadians and assisted in extending the historiography and range for Acadian scholars. Similar to Brasseaux, the expectation is for this thesis to inspire further research into more branches of Acadian history, specifically as the communities in Cape Breton.

The difficulty in locating enough resources that focus on the Acadians in Cape Breton did present a real challenge though. Robert Morgan was one of the first historians to dedicate his research to Cape Breton. In 1972, Morgan's Ph.D. thesis, "Orphan Outpost: Cape Breton Colony, 1784-1820," provided a general overview of the entire island during that era.<sup>33</sup> Despite his thesis not beginning with the initial founding of Cape Breton, it is still effective in providing important

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<sup>32</sup> Carl. Brasseaux has an extensive catalogue of publications focusing on this topic. Here are just a few of his works to consider if interested in this research: "A New Acadia: The Acadian Migrations to South Louisiana, 1764-1803," *Acadiensis* 15:1 (October, 1985); 123-132.; *Acadian to Cajun: Transformation of a People, 1803-1877* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1992).; And *French, Cajun, Creole, Houma: a Primer on Francophone Louisiana* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005).

<sup>33</sup> Robert Morgan, "Orphan Outpost: Cape Breton Colony, 1784-1820," (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Ottawa, 1972).

information and context for this time period. In the introduction he states that the reasoning behind his ambition to write about Cape Breton Island was due to the lack of prominence the island has had in academic work.<sup>34</sup> Thankfully, his frustration led to the production of an insightful thesis that may be the earliest academic histories of Cape Breton. Furthermore, what separates Morgan's thesis from many other scholarly works was his focus on not only the larger communities of the island but his focus on the smaller communities that are often older and have a rich history within them as well.

In 2008, Morgan published *Rise Again! The Story of Cape Breton Island*, which was a two-part series, with book one discussing Cape Breton from its founding into the twentieth century while book two discusses the emergence of a unique Cape Breton identity and their coal and steel markets.<sup>35</sup> Although the books do not go into great detail, they do provide a solid understanding of the establishment of Cape Breton and its more recent developments. Morgan was one of the main historians who began draw attention to Cape Breton and the rich history that the island holds. Morgan's contributions to the history of Cape Breton provide a solid foundation for further researchers. Viewing Morgan's work and utilizing his sources are beneficial when attempting to study Cape Breton. They are huge contributions to this field. Despite Morgan's work primarily focusing on the island as a whole, with some focus on the smaller communities, the research and historiography that followed had more focus on specific regions and communities.

In 1977, another graduate student from the University of Ottawa produced a thesis that was focused on Ile Royale. Adopting a similar approach to Morgan, Christopher Moore focused on the cod fishery and its overall contribution to the larger scale of European trade. Moore's thesis, titled "Merchant Trade in Louisbourg, Ile Royale," was not specifically focused on the relationship

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<sup>34</sup> Morgan, "Orphan Outpost," xi-xii.

<sup>35</sup> Robert Morgan, *Rise Again! The Story of Cape Breton Island*, (Canada: Cape Breton Books, 2008).

between the Acadians and British of the colony, but rather discussed the cod fishery on Cape Breton as a whole.<sup>36</sup> Throughout his thesis, Moore discussed how the French and the establishment of Louisbourg assisted in their ability to exploit the cod fishery on Cape Breton and led them to being able to contribute in a significant role to the overall European trade circuit. Due to this success, it created new trading opportunities between the newly developed colony, Île Royale, and many of the European countries who often visited these ports in Cape Breton. Moore does state in this thesis that he chose to focus on Louisbourg because there are limited records available for other ports, such as Port Toulouse (St. Peter's) and that it seems Louisbourg directed much of the cod fishery in the region.<sup>37</sup> In 1979, Moore continued his research regarding the cod fishery in Cape Breton with his journal article "The Other Louisbourg: Trade and Merchant Enterprise in Ile Royale 1713-58."<sup>38</sup> In this article, Moore made a similar observation as Morgan regarding the focus of Cape Breton amongst scholars. In his opinion, many historians view Île Royale as "little more than a buffer zone protecting the approaches to Canada."<sup>39</sup> Perhaps the neglect of research focusing on the Acadians in Cape Breton can be attributed to the misrepresentation of the colony's contributions to the broader European relations. As Moore's work suggests, the new colony of Cape Breton was a large contributor in the French maritime trade, exporting cod that was worth about three times more than the annual beaver fur stock – and only a few years after its foundation in 1713.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Christopher Moore, "Merchant Trade in Louisbourg, Ile Royale," (Master's Thesis, University of Ottawa, 1977).

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, 10.

<sup>38</sup> Christopher Moore, "The Other Louisbourg: Trade and Merchant Enterprise in Ile Royale 1713-58," *Social History* 12:23 (1979).

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, 79.

<sup>40</sup> Moore, "The Other Louisbourg," 79. For more information regarding maritime communities and fishing, Nicolas Landry's work is focused on this topic and the development of the modern Maritime fishery. His scholarship is written in French.

The examination of the smaller communities and their broader effects on the Cape Breton economy remains a minimal focus for many scholars. However, a shift towards these communities comes due to the scholarly work focusing on the cod fishery in the Atlantic. Within the Atlantic cod fishery historiography, two scholarly works are noticeably at the forefront regarding this topic. The first is a book titled *Cod Fisheries: The History of an International Economy*, Harold Innis focused on the close connection between the exploitation of the cod fishery and its relation to the overall economic and political development of North America and Western Europe.<sup>41</sup> In his review of Innis's book, Herbert Heaton quotes the historian James Shotwell, who stated that:

It is not too much to say that for most of us [south of the undefended boundary] it extends the frontiers of North America over a vast area that we have never thought of before as constituting a part--and a fundamental part-- of the continent.<sup>42</sup>

Furthermore, upon concluding his review of Innis's book, Heaton had high praise for the book and suggested that no scholar can afford to overlook the content and contribution this provides.<sup>43</sup> The second work is the article "The Ties That Bind: Culture and Agriculture, Property and Propriety in the Newfoundland Village Fishery" written by Gerald M. Sider.<sup>44</sup> This article is an in-depth overview of the history of the Atlantic fishing economy and how the industry developed and operated on Newfoundland. Robert Campbell claimed that historical studies following the works of Innis and Sider often presented this industry as being highly exploitive and

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<sup>41</sup> Harold A. Innis, *The Cod Fisheries: The History of an International Economy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1930).

<sup>42</sup> Herbert Heaton, "The Cod Fisheries: The History of an International Economy by Harold A. Innis (review)," *The Canadian Historical Review* 22:1 (March, 1941), 60.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*, 63.

<sup>44</sup> Gerald M. Sider, "The Ties That Bind: Culture and Agriculture, Property and Propriety in the Newfoundland Village Fishery," *Social History* 5:1 (Jan., 1980).

“having had a retarding effect on local economic development.”<sup>45</sup> It was these findings that sparked interest from other scholars, such as Rosemary Ommer, who set out to examine this truck system further.<sup>46</sup>

One of the first to dedicate a large portion of their research to these smaller communities was B. A. Balcom, who published *The Cod Fishery of Isle Royale, 1713-58*.<sup>47</sup> This research enabled Balcom to illustrate the importance of these coastal communities and their growth in population due to their effectiveness in the cod industry. Balcom did focus on the main fishing ports in Cape Breton, such as Louisbourg, but he also had tables and shipping records that showed the numbers and importance from smaller outports in the region. It is clear that he was attempting to stress the importance of these small communities, such as Isle Madame, by making statements like “Niganiche (Ingonish) and Petit de Grat, both relatively large and distant centres, were the only out-ports that regularly received trading vessels from abroad.”<sup>48</sup> Statements such as this demonstrate that these communities were small in numbers but they were large centres in terms of commerce for Cape Breton. Through the use of shipping records and vessel traffic, Balcom can successfully display the value that these communities, including ones along the southeastern coast, had on Cape Breton’s economy and trade.

The historical geographer Stephen J. Hornsby took the foundation provided by Clark, Morgan, Moore, and Balcom and extended it with his book, *Nineteenth-Century Cape Breton: A Historical Geography*, which focuses on the human geography of the island and discusses

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<sup>45</sup> Robert Campbell, “The Truck System in the Cape Breton Fishery: Phillip Robin and Company in Cheticamp, 1843-1852,” *Labour/Le Travail* 75 (Spring 2015); 74.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, 74.

<sup>47</sup> B.A. Balcom, *The Cod Fishery of Isle Royale, 1713-58*, (Canada: Parks Canada, 1984).

<sup>48</sup> Balcom, *The Cod Fishery*, 7.

communities such as Arichat, a crucial port in Isle Madame.<sup>49</sup> Similar to Balcom, Hornsby successfully uses shipping records for the harbours to demonstrate their importance for imports and exports. Furthermore, in terms of Cape Breton as a whole, Hornsby used census records to show the migration and growth of communities throughout the island. These are important documents as they illustrate the connection between the success of the out-port communities and how this was causing a pull-in factor for migrants from elsewhere. Relevant for the research of this thesis, Hornsby included research and figures for the coastal communities along the southeastern shore of Cape Breton.

Historian, A. J. B. Johnston, is one of the few historians to dedicate his research towards Cape Breton. Much of his research is focused on Louisbourg, but his 2004 book *Storied Shores: St. Peter's, Isle Madame, and Chapel Island in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries*, highlights the smaller, coastal fishing communities in the southeastern region of Cape Breton.<sup>50</sup> This book focused on the early communities that were not only established in this region but Cape Breton as well. Johnston is aware of the significance that the region had when looking at the time period of European expansion and the difficulty that came with those who tried to establish themselves in the area. The context of this book is strikingly similar to Hornsby's as Johnston discusses the establishment of Cape Breton Island and how these communities benefitted from their ability to capitalize on the expansive cod industry. More importantly, for this thesis, the communities highlighted in this book were early communities where the Acadians resided when they migrated due to their proximity to their families on the mainland.

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<sup>49</sup> Stephen J. Hornsby, *Nineteenth-Century Cape Breton: A Historical Geography*, (Canada: McGill-Queens Press, 1992).

<sup>50</sup> A.J.B. Johnston, *Storied Shores: St. Peter's, Isle Madame, and Chapel Island in the 17th and 18th Centuries*, (Cape Breton University Press, 2004).

Although the Acadians were pioneers in some regions of Cape Breton and assisted in establishing some of the earliest communities there, the research regarding them cannot exist without discussing the local Mi'kmaw population. Andrew Parnaby noted the neglect of research regarding the Mi'kmaq on Cape Breton and discussed this in his article "The Cultural Economy of Survival: The Mi'kmaq of Cape Breton in the Mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century."<sup>51</sup> This article is dedicated to explaining the difficult challenges that the local Mi'kmaw population were facing when the population of Cape Breton began to grow, and the indigenous people saw their lands and lifestyle becoming endangered due to the encroachment of these immigrants. Recognition of the local indigenous in these areas and their possible friendly relations are important to consider in both an Acadian history aspect and Mi'kmaw history as well. At minimum, most scholars should consult Daniel N. Paul's book *We Were not the Savages: A Mi'kmaq Perspective on the Collision between European and Native American Civilizations*.<sup>52</sup> Paul's book, as the title suggests, is a re-evaluation of the contact between European settlers and First Nations in North America, from the often-neglected perspective of the Mi'kmaq. *We Were not the Savages* provides unique insight into the world of the Mi'kmaq and their way of living prior to European settlement and after their contact. Paul also describes the difficulties the Mi'kmaq faced during the constant battle of power between the French and British on the Mi'kmaq homeland.

The research surrounding Cape Breton has evolved from its early forms. Due to the contributions from some of the early historians, such as Robert Morgan, it laid the foundation for others to use and further contribute to expanding the scholarly material associated with this topic. Scholars who have focused on the cod fishery in Cape Breton have altered their scopes and studied

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<sup>51</sup> Andrew Parnaby, "The Cultural Economy of Survival: The Mi'kmaq of Cape Breton in the Mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century," *Labour/Le Travail*, 61. (Spring 2008).

<sup>52</sup> Daniel N. Paul, *We Were not the Savages: A Mi'kmaq Perspective on the Collision between European and Native American Civilizations* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 2000).

these smaller communities. It is these contributions that offer new perspectives and research avenues for scholars to consider. Understanding the important relationship between the communities in the southeastern region and the Cape Breton economy not only contributes to the history of Cape Breton, but it also offers new insight into other relations to be explored, such as the relationship between the early Acadian settlers and the migrating British. The success of these communities resulted in population growth and structural growth within them. Through this, Acadians and British settlers were beginning to experience everyday living amongst one another. The scholarship available will be crucial in gathering an understanding of this dynamic relationship and using these, this thesis will address these relations and suggest that more scholarly work will need to be conducted to completely understand the relationship between these two parties. In doing so, the overall histories of the Acadians and their relationship with the British and parts of Cape Breton will be significantly enhanced.



## Chapter Two

Cape Breton is an island off the northeast coast of Nova Scotia. It is separated from the mainland by a mile-wide body of water known as the Gut of Canso.<sup>53</sup> The southeastern part of the island faces the open Atlantic Ocean, while the north shore faces the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Perhaps the most unique and intriguing aspect about Cape Breton Island is how vast and differing its terrain is from one side to the other. The interior of Cape Breton is entirely divided almost in half by the Bras d'Or Lakes, a salt-water body.<sup>54</sup> On the northern side of the Bras d'Or Lakes, the forests of fir, pine, birch, and maple cover large hills and small mountains. Continuing eastward towards Isle Madame, the hills begin to be replaced by rocky shorelines, occupied by harbours and small, scattered villages. This rough landscape and the remains of old harbours that no longer exist in the area are a reminder of a life that those early Acadians who lived in this region dealt with.<sup>55</sup> Stephen Hornsby described the landscape of these fishing villages as having been "set on rockbound parts of the coast and backed into the spruce forest, peat bog, and, along the Gulf shore, the steep slopes of the Cape Breton Highlands."<sup>56</sup> This description is a clear indication of the limited agricultural land available in this area, meaning that the Acadian families again had to adjust to their new environment and find a way to survive.

Before European exploration and eventual settlement on Cape Breton, the island was home to the indigenous Mi'kmaq. The first European permanent settlement was being attempted on the island in 1650 by French trader and explorer, Nicolas Denys. Denys established a trading post at

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<sup>53</sup> Robert Morgan, "Orphan Outpost," 1.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid, 1.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, 1.

<sup>56</sup> Stephen J. Hornsby, "Staple Trades, Subsistence Agriculture, and Nineteenth-Century Cape Breton Island" *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 79:3 (1989), 415.

St. Peter's around 1650<sup>57</sup> and this trading post was the last attempt at settlement by the French on the island for 44 years, until 1713 when the threat of losing their territory of Acadia became evident. Thus, they established their presence in Louisbourg with the construction of the fortified town of Louisbourg, completed in 1718.

Following the 1713 Treaty of Utrecht, the Acadian population began to consider relocating to Cape Breton. As a result of this treaty, the French surrendered their control over mainland of Nova Scotia, then known as Acadia, to the British. However, the French maintained control over two islands in the region: Île St. Jean (Prince Edward Island) and Île Royale (Cape Breton). Due to the French losing control of Acadia, and also of fishing ports in Newfoundland, outlooks were adjusted and new strategies adopted including the re-establishment of their lucrative cod industry.<sup>58</sup> It was clear that Cape Breton had all of the geographic essentials needed to establish a large-scale fishing industry.<sup>59</sup> For the French to achieve this goal, they had to implement a plan that would ensure the colony could prosper from this industry. It became clear that for this to work, three necessities needed to materialize. The first was to re-locate both civil and military officers to the new colony of Cape Breton. The second was to convince the small fishing population of Newfoundland to move to Cape Breton. Thirdly, the French government had to convince the agriculturalists of Acadia, the Acadians, to move to Cape Breton.<sup>60</sup>

Perhaps the uncertainty of their future in Nova Scotia instilled a sense of necessity in the minds of the Acadian population towards the idea of moving to a new colony. Aware of these attempts by the French government to try to convince the Acadians to re-locate to Cape Breton,

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<sup>57</sup> Nicolas Denys, *The Descriptions and Natural History of the Coasts of North America (Acadia)* translated by William F. Ganong (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1908).

<sup>58</sup> Bernard Pothier, "Acadian Emigration to Ile Royale After the Conquest of Acadia," *Social History*, 3:6 (1970), 116.

<sup>59</sup> Bernard Pothier, "Acadian Settlement on Ile-Royale, 1713-1734," M.A. Thesis in History, (Ottawa: University of Ottawa, 1967); 27.

<sup>60</sup> Pothier, "Acadian Emigration," 116.

the British attempted to deny the Acadians' permission to leave Nova Scotia for the new colony. Despite the attempts from the British to diminish Acadian interest in Cape Breton, the Acadians sent observers to study the land. The observers' findings were unfavourable.<sup>61</sup> Despite the negative report of Cape Breton by the Acadian surveyors, a modest emigration of Acadians to Cape Breton occurred; in 1714, 67 Acadian families migrated to Cape Breton, and established communities in and around St. Peter's.<sup>62</sup> These early Acadian settlers had a large influence on the re-emergence of the cod fishery in these coastal communities.

The Acadians proved their adaptability time and time again. Although fishing was not a main occupation amongst the Acadian population, many along the south coast of Acadia and in the Port Royal region had established a living for themselves through this industry.<sup>63</sup> The Acadians were primarily considered for Ile Royale for the purpose of transferring their agricultural expertise to the new colony. The French did not expect, however, that the Acadians could also be attracted by the cod fishery on the island.<sup>64</sup> However, Samuel Vetch, the Governor at Port Royal following the surrender in 1710, understood the importance of the Acadians and the benefits that they could have on the new colony. Vetch claimed that:

...their skill in the fishery as well as the cultivating the soil must inevitably make that island by such an accession of people at once the most powerful colony the French have in America and of the greatest danger and damage to all the British colonies<sup>65</sup>

The early fishery on Cape Breton was virtually run by the Acadians. During the 1720s, in proportion to their population, the Acadians were the most active workers in terms of employed

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<sup>61</sup> Pothier, "Acadian Emigration," 119.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid, 120.

<sup>63</sup> Pothier, "Acadian Settlement," 94.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid, 95.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, 95.

vessels.<sup>66</sup> In 1724 they represented 19% of the population of Cape Breton and employed 10, or 32%, of the 31 vessels. In 1726, although the number of vessels as a whole had decreased to 29, 13, or nearly 45%, belonged to Acadians.<sup>67</sup> By 1774 the non-indigenous population of Cape Breton Island was approximately 1,012 and the Acadian population numbered 502 in communities primarily settled along the southeastern coast in St. Peter's and on Isle Madame.<sup>68</sup>

In 1752, Thomas Pichon, a Frenchman working for the British, travelled throughout Cape Breton and recorded his impressions of the landscapes, economy, and relations within the communities and its peoples. These recordings were later published in 1758.<sup>69</sup> His primary mission was to prove to the British that Cape Breton could be beneficial to them. In Pichon's writings, he had favourable reviews for the communities in southeastern Cape Breton and their success. Pichon described Port Toulouse (St. Peter's) as "the most considerable harbour in the island of Cape Breton next to Louisbourg; and of the two is the most populous."<sup>70</sup> In Pichon's opinion, it was crucial that the British establish settlers there due to its location and being a means of central communications and a place of refuge for the Mi'kmaq and settlers of neighbouring communities such as Isle Madame, Petit de Grat, and L'Ardoise.<sup>71</sup> The most important aspect of the St. Peter's location, according to Pichon, was the fact that the Mi'kmaq of Cape Breton and Acadia brought their furs there to trade for European goods.<sup>72</sup> Pichon's opinions of St. Peter's suggested that this community might be the most crucial to maintain or assist the British in their attempt to establish themselves on Cape Breton.

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<sup>66</sup> Pothier, "Acadian Settlement," 103.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid, 103.

<sup>68</sup> D.C. Harvey, "Scottish Immigration to Cape Breton," *Dalhousie Review*, 21:3 (1941), 314.

<sup>69</sup> Thomas Pichon, *Genuine Letters and Memoirs, relating to the natural, civil, and commercial history of the islands of Cape Breton, and Saint John, from the first settlement there, to .. 1758*, (London, 1760).

<sup>70</sup> Ibid, 18.

<sup>71</sup> Pichon, *Genuine Letters.*, 42.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, 41.

Pichon had a less favourable view of Isle Madame, claiming that “we quitted this country without any other regret other than that of leaving such miserable people behind us.”<sup>73</sup> Despite their ability to not cultivate the soil, Pichon did praise the character of the people in Isle Madame as being able to live as comfortably as they can considering their small amount of commerce, mainly being hunting and fishing.<sup>74</sup> Despite the island as a whole getting poor reviews from Pichon, Petit de Grat garnered praise from him. Aside from Pichon stating the benefits of the Petit de Grat harbour and its easy access, he also records that the approximately 137 inhabitants of the community are “entirely employed in the fishery, in which they meet with success; for on this spot, they catch by far the best cod, and in the greatest quantity, of any part of the island.”<sup>75</sup> Based on the reports recorded by Pichon, the Acadian communities were of great interest to the British and their plans to expand the cod industry. Removing the threat of the Acadians would provide an opportunity for the British to capitalize on cod industry.

Despite the initial Acadians having success in the cod industry, in 1758, the French were forcibly removed from Cape Breton following the fall of Louisbourg. As Ross and Deveau mentioned, in 1760, there was roughly 10 Acadian families from St. Peters leading a nomadic lifestyle, more or less in hiding, around Isle Madame.<sup>76</sup> In the early 1760s, the British and colonial merchants began their attempts at rebuilding this industry on Cape Breton.<sup>77</sup> For the purpose of revitalizing the cod industry, the Acadians were given permission to return to Nova Scotia, granted that they take the oath of allegiance.<sup>78</sup> The efforts to bring the Acadians back was primarily done by Jacques Robin, a Huguenot merchant from the Isle of Jersey, who valued the Acadians

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid, 47.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid, 46.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid, 51.

<sup>76</sup> Ross and Deveau, *The Acadians of Nova Scotia*, 74.

<sup>77</sup> Hornsby, *Nineteenth-century Cape Breton*, 4.

<sup>78</sup> Ross & Deveau, *The Acadians*, 74.

knowledge of the region and their relations with the Mi'kmaq, which would benefit his business.<sup>79</sup> As these revitalization attempts were being made, some of the deported Acadian fishermen from Cape Breton returned and settled in Isle Madame and Chéticamp.<sup>80</sup> The primarily Acadian community of Arichat was the largest benefactor of this revitalization having been the main concentration for the cod fishery and the largest community by the early nineteenth century.<sup>81</sup> Aside from being the main fishing port on Isle Madame, Arichat was one of two custom ports in Cape Breton and was the principal distribution centre for imported supplies and the collection and exporting of dried fish; having 81 percent of Cape Breton's dried-fish pass through it in 1796.<sup>82</sup>

The Acadians played a fundamental role in the cod fishery, especially in its early establishments in Cape Breton. The participation in the cod fishery was common throughout the island, usually on a small scale, but the community that was most able to systematically exploit this industry was Arichat.<sup>83</sup> In the later years of the eighteenth-century, when Cape Breton came under the British rule, merchants from the Channel Islands began looking for opportunities to capitalize on this lucrative industry in Cape Breton.<sup>84</sup> One of the earliest British businesses that began operating in this region was the Robin Company, which later became known as Charles Robin and Company (CRC). The CRC operated under this name until the mid-1760s when Charles Robin began to focus more on the fishery in the Baie des Chaleurs. As a result, the operations at Arichat became known as Philip Robin and Company (PRC).<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid, 74.

<sup>80</sup> Hornsby, *Nineteenth-century Cape Breton*, 5.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>82</sup> Hornsby, *Nineteenth-Century Cape Breton*, 5.

<sup>83</sup> Robert Campbell, "The Merchant Triangle in Transition: Managing the Cod Fishery from Eastern Harbour, Cape Breton, in 1891," *Social History* 48:97 (2015); 360.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid, 360.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid, 361. (Due to some sources still referring to the company in Arichat as the CRC during this time period, for simplicity, this paper will still refer to it as the CRC as well. All companies under the Robin name were under the umbrella of the CRC.)

In 1765, John Robin, Charles Robin's brother, established his well-known merchant and trading company in the Acadian village of Arichat. When John Robin first arrived in Arichat, he began to trade with the Acadian inhabitants.<sup>86</sup> The growth and success of this company in the region relied heavily upon the local population for support and vice versa as many "local communities depended on the company for virtually all the necessities of life, obtaining goods on credit and fishing for it to pay down their debts."<sup>87</sup> The business model that the CRC employed saw capital, management, and the goods needed for successful fishing and daily survival being supplied from England, while the fishing was left to the local inhabitants due to their knowledge and expertise.<sup>88</sup> Therefore, being located in Arichat, the local population was heavily relied upon due to their experience, meaning the company employed many local Acadians.<sup>89</sup>

To expand and increase its dominance in the region, the CRC created working relationships with the neighbouring fishing communities, such as Petit de Grat, which resulted in John Robin establishing Robin, Pipon, and Company on Isle Madame. This expansion contributed to one of the strongest fishing monopolies in the region that would later become Atlantic Canada.<sup>90</sup> This company was still under the umbrella of the parent company, the CRC. These companies used an operation known as the truck system, which allowed them to control the market completely and reduce the risk of being challenged by independent, fishermen.<sup>91</sup> Simply put, this system meant that the merchants outfitted the fishermen for the year, both with gear and provisions, on a credit

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<sup>86</sup> Erna MacLeod, "The Letterbooks of Charles Robin-Collas & Company: Changes and Challenges in Cape Breton Island's Cod Fishery, 1886-1895," *Acadiensis* XLII, no. 2(Summer/Autumn 2013): 29.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid*, 28.

<sup>88</sup> Campbell, "The Merchant Triangle," 361.

<sup>89</sup> Morgan, *Orphan Outpost*," 84-85.

<sup>90</sup> MacLeod, "The Letterbooks," 29.

<sup>91</sup> Rosemary E. Ommer, "'All of the Fish of the Post': Resource Property Rights and Development in a Nineteenth-Century Inshore Fishery," *Acadiensis* X, no.2 (Spring 1981): 111.

system that relied on the fishermen repaying through their year-end catch.<sup>92</sup> This system allowed the CRC to control the prices in the fishery and keep the fishermen in work, but also keep them in the debt of the companies. Within this system, in times the prices were high for their catch, the fishermen could make a good return. However, this design was meant to benefit the merchants, therefore when the return was bad, the fishermen would fall into debt to the merchants.<sup>93</sup> One Arichat Priest stated that “most of the people are deep in the books of the merchants, who treat them with horrible tyranny...”<sup>94</sup> Rosemary Ommer suggested that many of those residing in the Gaspé region were also involved in the truck system but noted that they were essentially stuck in these communities due to their isolation and the cost of outmigration; it was likely a similar situation for those in the Acadian communities of Cape Breton.<sup>95</sup> This system was not only focused on the Acadian fishermen, as local agriculturalist were also indebted by the local merchants. If prices were down for one resource, it affected the others. Thus, “merchants, planters, and fishermen were bound together by lines of credit and debt.”<sup>96</sup> Whether intentional or not, the relationships among these three parties was important as one relied on the other for success.

With the success of the CRC and other English Channel Island companies, who began to establish businesses along the coasts of Cape Breton, the working operation began to alter. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the Channel Island companies brought seasonal labour to assist with fishing, cure the catch, and staff the fishing stations.<sup>97</sup> As the migratory fishing approach began to decline during the early nineteenth century, the Channel Island companies

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid, 111.

<sup>93</sup> Hornsby, “Staple Trades,” 415.

<sup>94</sup> Hornsby, “Staple Trades,” 415.

<sup>95</sup> Rosemary E. Ommer, “The Truck System in Gaspé, 1822-1877,” *Acadiensis* xix, 1 (1989); 112.

<sup>96</sup> Hornsby, “Staple Trades,” 415.

<sup>97</sup> Hornsby, “Staple Trades,” 413.



began to dominate the expanding resident fishery in Cape Breton.<sup>98</sup> As the population of these communities began to grow, the resident population began filling the voids. As early as 1800, most of the labour for these companies were filled by permanent residents. For example, the fishing companies at Arichat and Chéticamp “outfitted several hundred fishermen, virtually all of them Acadians.”<sup>99</sup> The contribution of the Acadians to the cod fishery was significant in building up the industry and also contributing to the influx of British settlers migrating to these once small Acadian communities and beginning to form new community make-ups.

During the years of 1784 to 1820, Cape Breton was an autonomous colony. In 1786, the Acadians at Isle Madame were corresponding with Lieutenant-Governor DesBarres regarding their future on the island and maintained hope of not having to pay taxes and alter their livelihood. In the letter, they stated that they “have chosen this spot to form a settlement, and we wish to taste that tranquility which a long series of miseries & misfortunes has taught us how to value.”<sup>100</sup> Furthermore, the Acadians also mention that the fishery was their only occupation and way of having subsistence, stating that the “Fishery being our sole occupation, and having no other way of getting a subsistence, We humbly request your Excellency will please to direct that our shalloups & other craft employed carrying it on, may be free from taxes and imposts.”<sup>101</sup> Being one of the most dominant staples for the island during this time, the cod industry supported roughly two-thirds of the population and attracted many skilled British labourers and much mercantile capital, which resulted in the improvement of Cape Breton’s economy and ability to participate in the

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid, 413.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid, 414.

<sup>100</sup> Cape Breton Gen Web Project, “Colonial Correspondence, Cape Breton: CO 217, V.104, pp. 205-207,” transcribed by Janice Fralic-Brown. [[http://www.capebretongenweb.com/Colonial/corr\\_3.html](http://www.capebretongenweb.com/Colonial/corr_3.html)]

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

North Atlantic commercial world.<sup>102</sup> Clearly, the fishery was a major economic contributor to these Acadian families.

At the turn of the nineteenth-century, Cape Breton was still a relatively young and thinly populated colony. The population was barely 2,500 people and they were mainly scattered around the coast in a few settlements.<sup>103</sup> There was some diversity to the population during this time. Approximately half of the population were French-speaking Acadians, who had settled mainly on Isle Madame on the southeastern tip of the island and in and around Chéticamp towards the northern west coast. There were also some Irish, Scottish, and Loyalist settlers.<sup>104</sup> Due to the rough terrain that the Acadians settled on in Isle Madame, they could not rely on their agricultural ways as they did on the mainland to survive, thus they had to adapt to the new staple available which was the lucrative cod industry. By this time, merchant-shipping companies from the Channel Islands, such as Guernsey and Jersey, had already established themselves in the Acadian communities and provided significant employment among the Acadians.<sup>105</sup> The success of these companies improved the awareness around these communities and the cod fishery. As such, populations from other Cape Breton communities began to integrate into these Acadian communities. These migrations began to intersect multiple populations into smaller communities with British and American settlers beginning to associate with these southeastern Acadian communities, such as Arichat because of their success.<sup>106</sup> Furthermore, these successes witnessed by the communities involved in the cod fishery resulted in an influx in the population to these

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<sup>102</sup> Hornsby, *Nineteenth-century*, 3.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid*, 3.

<sup>104</sup> D.C. Harvey "Scottish Immigration to Cape Breton," *Dalhousie Review* 21:3 (1941); 314.

<sup>105</sup> Harvey "Scottish Immigration," 314.

<sup>106</sup> Harvey, "Scottish," 315.

communities with settlers from the South of Ireland, such as Wexford and New England beginning to settle.<sup>107</sup>

Cape Breton's lieutenant governor between 1787 and 1815 was William Macarmick and he understood the valuable contribution the Acadian population could make towards the British success in the cod industry. In his book *The Acadian Diaspora: An Eighteenth-Century History*, Christopher Hodson suggests that following the completion of the Seven Years War, the realities of imperialism led to a large demand of labour, which altered the way states approached business.<sup>108</sup> Perhaps this had an influence on Macarmick's approach to reduce the tension and establish a friendship with these individuals.<sup>109</sup> To achieve a healthy relationship, Macarmick granted Acadians legal rights to land in 1790 and removed all fishing cures fees for the Acadian fishermen.<sup>110</sup> Furthermore, Macarmick allowed a group of refugee Acadians from Saint-Pierre and Miquelon, to settle in Isle Madame and Chéticamp in the early 1790s, because of their ability to assist in the fishery and shipbuilding.<sup>111</sup> Although the motive of establishing these relationships was for monetary gain and stability, which was in the interest of the British Government, the relationship benefitted the Acadians as well. For instance, this may have been the first time they felt needed and secured in a British-controlled colony. With the Acadians and British working together, shipping in the southeastern communities began to see an increase of global interest. Between July and October of 1787, 8,000 quintals<sup>112</sup> of cod were shipped from Arichat to areas

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<sup>107</sup> Hornsby, *Nineteenth-century Cape Breton*, 3.

<sup>108</sup> Christopher Hodson, *The Acadian Diaspora: An Eighteenth-Century History*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); 8.

<sup>109</sup> Morgan, "Orphan Outpost," 85.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid*, 86.

<sup>111</sup> R. J. Morgan, "MACARMICK, WILLIAM," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 5, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed March 29,

<sup>112</sup> A "quintal" is a unit of weight that is approximately equivalent to 100lbs.

such as Jersey, Spain, Portugal, and the United States.<sup>113</sup> Between October 1787 and January 1788, 15,324 quintals were shipped and from July 1795 to January 1796, 15,000 quintals of dried cod left from Arichat. Finally, from July 1796 to January 1797, 14,000 quintals were shipped.<sup>114</sup> These numbers are significant because they demonstrate the importance of the cod fishery in the region to support the economy and the local families.

These southeastern Acadian communities attracted interest from individual merchants as well as large companies. The Kavanagh family was a well-known merchant family in the area, which operated out of St. Peter's. Laurence Kavanagh Sr. is an individual who exemplified the newly formed positive relations between the British and Acadian populations as he married an Acadian woman named Felicité LeJeune. Although the Kavanagh family was originally from Ireland, they were Roman Catholic which may have made it easier or more desirable to integrate into the Acadian communities. Also, understanding the local business and ethnic dominance of the Acadians in Cape Breton, these may have been factors into Laurence's decision to marry LeJeune.<sup>115</sup> As one of the first English-speaking families to reside in Cape Breton, Kavanagh Sr. relocated to Cape Breton following the Fall of Louisbourg in 1758.<sup>116</sup> Once in Cape Breton, the family established themselves as merchants by supplying the British garrison at Louisbourg with the supplies that were needed.<sup>117</sup> Following the death of the patriarch Laurence in 1774, his two sons James and Laurence Jr were left to run the operations their father had amassed with their mother, Margaret. In 1777, the family relocated to St. Peter's, due to its proximity to Isle Madame

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<sup>113</sup> Morgan, "Orphan Outpost," 90.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 90.

<sup>115</sup> S. Karly Kehoe, "Catholic Relief and the Political Awakening of Irish Catholics in Nova Scotia, 1780-1830," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 46:1 (2018); 9.

<sup>116</sup> R. J. Morgan, "KAVANAGH, LAURENCE," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 6, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed March 29, 2018, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/kavanagh\\_laurence\\_6E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/kavanagh_laurence_6E.html).

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*

and being a central settlement for communications and commerce.<sup>118</sup> The next move for the duo was to separate so the company could expand. James eventually moved to Halifax, while the then 14-year-old Laurence controlled the company's interests in Arichat, Main-a-Dieu, and St. Peter's.<sup>119</sup> Laurence did understand the importance of speaking French for business relations in this region as well as understanding the benefits of forming family ties to the Acadian population and the benefits this could produce in creating networks that extended beyond British merchants.<sup>120</sup>

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the cod fishery dominated the Cape Breton economy. Interestingly, during this time, there was only one main port in operation in Arichat.<sup>121</sup> As noted above, the success of the cod fishery drew great interest from British merchants and skilled labourers, but it also allowed Cape Breton to become tied into the North Atlantic commercial world.<sup>122</sup> Stephen Hornsby illustrates the importance of Arichat and its ability to become a central port for Cape Breton and the Atlantic trade circuit in his article "Staple Trades, Subsistence Agriculture, and Nineteenth-Century Cape Breton Island."<sup>123</sup> The Acadian community provided the merchants with fish. Following the process of drying the cod, the fish was then shipped to various locations, including the West Indies, Britain, South America, and Europe, in addition to other areas within Atlantic Canada. Furthermore, the map also reveals the importance of Arichat to the entire trade network since it was exporting dried fish across the globe and importing many goods from these trade partners also. The success of Arichat can be attributed in large part to the Acadian presence.

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Kehoe, "Catholic Relief," 9.

<sup>121</sup> Stephen J. Hornsby, *Nineteenth-century*, 3.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid, 3.

<sup>123</sup> Hornsby, "Staple Trades," 414.

The cod fishery was not the only factor influencing the transforming relationship between the British and the Acadians, but it was instrumental. Other nations were also beginning to adapt and rebuild relations with these southeastern Cape Breton communities. In 1877, Captain Simon Chivarie was examined and questioned by the British Crown to answer questions regarding the fisheries in the Atlantic region. During the questioning, he was asked about the opportunity of American vessels coming to the Atlantic waters in order to fish. The further questioning led to the Crown asking him if they paid only in shares or if other wage systems were in place. In response, Chivarie claimed that schooners have “passed along the Gut of Canso or Arichat and those places and hired men at so much per month instead of shares.”<sup>124</sup> This small claim is significant because it provides evidence that vessels from other nations, aside from Britain, and in this case American, were entering these Acadian communities along the southeastern coast and hiring locals to work for them on wages. During the nineteenth century, the Acadian communities in places like Isle Madame, were under the control of British companies, such as the CRC, who were hiring them for low-paying wages for their assistance with the cod in the area.<sup>125</sup> Due to this outlook, they were able to employ these hard-working individuals and use their expertise for profit.

The cod industry was a large contributor to the success of the Cape Breton economy, and this was the reason Macarmick wanted to relieve the tension between the British and Acadians in the area following the Le Grand Dérangement. He was aware of their success in the industry and viewed them as a key contributor to the potential success for the British. The benefits that came with the newly formed relationship between the two parties were more beneficial for the British

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<sup>124</sup> Halifax Commission, Maurice Delfosse, Sir Alexander Tiloch Galt, *Award of the Fishery Commission: Documents and Proceedings of the Halifax Commission, 1877, Under the Treaty of Washington of May 8<sup>th</sup>, 1871, Volume 1,* (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1878); 453.

<sup>125</sup> Fisheries and Oceans Canada, *The Acadian Fishery in Nova Scotia*, (Dartmouth: Communications Branch Fisheries and Oceans Canada, 2004); 4.

merchants, but the Acadians did benefit as well. The industry as a whole began to explode in economic importance which resulted in financial gain for the British merchants while the Acadian population was being employed by these companies and beginning to witness their communities changing in terms of ethnic diversity.

The success of the cod fishery could be attributed to the beginning of a working relationship being formed between British businessmen and the local Acadian populations in Cape Breton. With the early Jersey merchants attempting to exploit this industry and establishing shops in the Acadian villages, they began the process of a working relationship with the Acadian population. For their business model to work, they relied upon the local populations to operate the day-to-day operations and fishing aspects of the company. They employed the Acadians and although the model of business may have left the Acadian fishermen vulnerable to the merchants, the relationship benefitted both parties.

Statements such as the one made by Chivarie confirm the employment of Acadians by the American and Jersey merchants. Their use of the local Acadian population was self-interested in terms of securing their own fortune, but nonetheless they did employ them which led to a working relationship to emerge. With the success of the fishing industry in Cape Breton, many of these once predominately Acadian communities began to witness a shift in demographics by the turn of the nineteenth century. Although the Acadians maintained the majority of the population, some of the strategically placed Acadian communities became a key destination for British migration. This led to the communities becoming diverse and also evolving into more advanced towns. Evidently, the cod fishery contributed to the absorption of British settlers into Acadian communities. Both parties would have to adapt to the shifting dynamic of living amongst one another in these tight-quarters communities.

### Chapter Three

Although the Acadians were strong and independent people, who worked towards maintaining their own identity and social circles, forming working relationships with new neighbours was not a new concept for them. The scattered pre-Conquest villages of French migrants, who were agriculturalists and fishermen, sought to live peacefully and make their own way in this new land amongst their own communities.<sup>126</sup> There were many aspects of the Acadian way of life that differed from that of other European descended people, one of which was their capability in forming working relations with the local Mi'kmaq population. Although there was conflict between the two in the eighteenth-century, the early years of settlement saw a cooperative relationship. Despite the Acadians establishing homesteads on the land occupied by the Mi'kmaq, it did not cause conflict amongst the two.<sup>127</sup> Instead, Indigenous skills were passed along to the Acadians and, on limited occasions, there was an integration of indigenous women into Acadian families through marriage.<sup>128</sup> For example, in Gregory Kennedy, Thomas Peace and Stephanie Pettigrew's article "Social Networks across Chignecto: Applying Social Network Analysis to Acadie, Mi'kma'ki, and Nova Scotia, 1670-1751,"<sup>129</sup> they discussed the results they found from applying a Social Networking Analysis to investigate the relationship between the Acadians and the Mi'kmaq in Beaubassin. They concluded through their research that, for this area specifically, there seemed to be a relationship established between some members of the two parties, built

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<sup>126</sup> Naomi Griffiths, *The Contexts of Acadian History, 1686-1784*, (Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992); 77.

<sup>127</sup> Griffiths, *The Acadians*, 5.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid*, 5.

<sup>129</sup> Gregory Kennedy, Thomas Peace, Stephanie Pettigrew, "Social Networks across Chignecto: Applying Social Network Analysis to Acadie, Mi'kma'ki, and Nova Scotia, 1670-1751," *Acadiensis* 47:1 (Winter/Spring, 2018).



through the fur trade and in some cases, this relationship was strong enough for religious participation together.<sup>130</sup>

This ability to work with others was noticeable by the late eighteenth century. The cod fishery brought a lot of foreign interest into these Acadian communities which resulted in the ethnic dynamics of these communities beginning to alter. Aside from the Jersey merchants coming across the Atlantic Ocean to establish shops for the cod industry, migrants from a range of British territories and other European nations began relocating to these communities. This chapter focuses on the shifting dynamic of these communities and how the resulting change forced the Acadians to adapt to the evolving circumstances surrounding them. In many communities, the British migrants were beginning to settle within the Acadian communities. For the families in these communities to continue with their livelihood and daily operations, working relations had to be established. To display these community integrations, sources such as migration maps, militia papers, crown records, and land petitions will be consulted.

Cape Breton has witnessed many periods of migration into the colony. Although very early inhabitants of the island, the Acadians were settling, once again, on land that was home to the local Mi'kmaq. Similar to their first arrival to Nova Scotia, the Acadians were able to establish friendly relationships with the Mi'kmaq, since they were primarily settling in locations that were known for their Mi'kmaw presence. The Mi'kmaq maintained a strong spiritual connection to many areas within Cape Breton, but Chapel Island was known as their primary spiritual centre. Because of this spiritual connection and the convenience of a short isthmus that linked the Atlantic Ocean to the Bras d'Or Lakes, this location was of great significance to the Mi'kmaq. The encroachment of white settlers on Mi'kmaw land was rapidly increasing to the point where, in 1819, resident Peter

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<sup>130</sup> Kennedy, Peace, Pettigrew, "Social Networks," 39.

Tomah, claimed that on “behalf of himself and other Indians,” he requested that the colonial government “secure to them” Chapel Island.<sup>131</sup> Since the Mi’kmaq were migratory, depending on the season, they often set up camps around the island and often resided near communities that were becoming predominately Acadian like St. Peter’s and Arichat. Following the removal of the Acadians in Cape Breton, this initiated a unique relationship between them and the Mi’kmaq. Robert Morgan states that “Out of fear and dislike of the Protestant English conquerors,” the Mi’kmaq would stay close to the Acadians hiding in the interior, supplying them with “food and intelligence of British movements, and with whom they sometimes intermarried.”<sup>132</sup>

Perhaps the relationship between the Mi’kmaq people and the migrating Acadians was an example of a working relationship. While some Mi’kmaq feared for their way of living in other parts of the island, due to the shrinking land they were being offered and the encroachment from white European settlers, there is evidence to suggest that this was not the case in what would become Richmond County.<sup>133</sup> George Edward Jean, a local resident in the nineteenth-century, suggested there was a “sophisticated blend of cultural tenacity and economic survival that existed amongst the Mi’kmaq of Cape Breton at mid-century” in Richmond County.<sup>134</sup> Furthermore, Jean also observed that following the planting of their potatoes, the Mi’kmaq often camped in the vicinity of Arichat. While there, the men were employed as labourers while the women sold craft products. Upon the commencement of their digging season, the Mi’kmaq returned to their homes and prepared for the remaining part of winter.<sup>135</sup> Despite the encroachment on their land that resulted in the Mi’kmaq having to adjust their traditional lifestyles, the Mi’kmaq and residents in

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<sup>131</sup> Parnaby, “The Cultural Economy of Survival,” 74.

<sup>132</sup> Robert Morgan, *Rise Again!*, 56.

<sup>133</sup> Parnaby, “The Cultural Economy of Survival,” 72-73.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid*, 72-73.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid*, 73.

these Acadian communities appeared to have some understanding and ability to work with one another. This further supports the idea that the Acadians were able to adapt to new surroundings and form beneficial relations with new neighbours.

Although the relationship between the Acadians and Mi'kmaq could be attributed to something as simple as a mutual interest, it could also be due in part to a shared Catholicism. Religion had a strong hold over many communities during this time and the communities in Richmond County were no exception. The religious loyalties in these communities also depict a changing dynamic within these areas. For example, as early as 1820, both the Presbyterian and Roman Catholic churches divided the population on the island practically in half, with both intending on becoming the sole ruling religion and authority of the island.<sup>136</sup> The race for religious dominance was so important that in 1843, Rev. Murdoch Stewart was posted to Cape Breton by the Church of Scotland's colonial committee in an attempt to "reform the morals and disorderly habits of the immigrants," despite his unfavourable remarks of the posting in which he claimed "if there was any place to which I would be unwilling to go than another, it was Cape Breton."<sup>137</sup> Although the division of religious loyalties was fairly evenly split, the Roman Catholic Church was ascending throughout Richmond County, by overtaking divided religious allegiances within communities such as St. Peter's, Arichat, and L'Ardoise.<sup>138</sup> With these communities being settled by a predominately Acadian populace, Catholicism was the dominant religion.<sup>139</sup> The arrival of Irish and Scottish Highland migrants to these southeastern Cape Breton communities brought further support of Catholicism within Richmond County. However, the rise in the Presbyterian

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<sup>136</sup> Laurie C.C. Stanley-Blackwell, *The Well-Watered Garden: the Presbyterian Church in Cape Breton, 1798-1860*, (Cape Breton: University College of Cape Breton Press, 1983); 29.

<sup>137</sup> Elizabeth Vibert, "Cape Breton Island, 1843," *Victorian Review* 36;1 (Spring 2010); 15.

<sup>138</sup> Stanley-Blackwell, *The Well-Watered*, 29.

<sup>139</sup> See map of religion by area in Stephen J. Hornsby, "Staple Trades, Subsistence Agriculture, and Nineteenth-Century Cape Breton Island" *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 79:3 (1989), 415

churches also demonstrates that some of these migrants, along with loyalists from British colonies, were bringing the Presbyterian faith along with them, again altering the community make-up within these regions. As seen in this map, areas such as River Inhabitants and surrounding areas of St. Peter's saw an influx in Scottish Presbyterian migrants.

One of the earliest census polls of Cape Breton was conducted in 1787 and demonstrated how diverse the island was becoming. This record was an overall view of several townships in Nova Scotia, including Cape Breton Island. Within this report, it recorded the population of the island, along with a record of a specific religion and the country from which the population originated. According to these census records, Cape Breton had 287 Protestants and 420 Roman Catholics.<sup>140</sup> This record also noted the origin of the population on Cape Breton. According to this census, at the time, Cape Breton had the following: 169 Irish, 120 American, 70 English, 6 Scottish, and 21 other Foreigners.<sup>141</sup> Unfortunately, this census does not record the Acadian families present on the island or the Mi'kmaw community and does not provide an answer as to why. Despite the omission of Acadians and Mi'kmaw communities, this census is further evidence of an evolving cultural presence on Cape Breton and does suggest that the island was witnessing a larger British presence beginning to blend with the Acadian population.

Examining the population distribution maps that Robert Morgan provides in his 1972 PhD thesis, a better understanding of the population patterns comes into view which offers a clearer depiction of major shifts in migrations and integration into communities.<sup>142</sup> In 1785, the

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<sup>140</sup> Commissioner of Public Records Nova Scotia Archives, RG 1, Vol. 443 no. 1 Census Returns 1767-1787. (Accessed on March 31, 2020 <https://novascotia.ca/archives/census/returnsRG1v443.asp?ID=1>).

<sup>141</sup> Commissioner of Public Records Nova Scotia Archives, RG 1, Vol. 443 no. 1 Census Returns 1767-1787. (Accessed on March 31, 2020 <https://novascotia.ca/archives/census/returnsRG1v443.asp?ID=1>).

<sup>142</sup> Population distribution maps for the years 1785, 1795, 1810, and 1825 can be found in Robert Morgan, "Orphan Outpost: Cape Breton Colony, 1784-1820," (PhD Thesis, University of Ottawa, 1972); 93-94, 196, 216.

population was still sparse scarce and predominately Acadian. The majority of the population was located within the Richmond County area, from River Inhabitants along the coast up to Fourchu. Throughout this region, the Acadians lived in the coastal communities, while a cluster of Loyalists resided in St. Peter's. Although the population was not as diverse at this point as it would become, this does suggest that the once Acadian-dominated St. Peter's was beginning to see an influx of British and Loyalist settlers. However, the majority of the Loyalist and the 'others' were located around Sydney, Louisbourg, and Baddeck. Despite a small number of Loyalists in St. Peter's, the Acadians were still fairly segregated from the British Loyalists in 1785. This trend stays the course throughout 1795 as well. The Acadian population began to expand further westward towards Port Hawkesbury and further into River Inhabitants.<sup>143</sup> The Loyalists near St. Peter's seemed to relocate elsewhere, with the Loyalist population around Sydney growing rapidly. What was interesting about the population distribution in the 1795 map was the emergence of the Scottish Highlanders. The Scottish population began to grow in Judique and St. George's Bay, but the more interesting pattern was the group of Highland Scots that began to migrate along the River Inhabitants. At this time, there was still some separation between the Acadians and other ethnicities, but the gap was slowly closing. The population of Scottish settlers in Richmond County began expanding and encroaching into these Acadian communities.

Beginning in the late eighteenth century, several waves of Scottish immigrants relocated to Cape Breton.<sup>144</sup> By the early years of the nineteenth century, many Cape Breton communities began to diversify due to the large influx of Highland Scots immigrants.<sup>145</sup> In 1810, the majority of the Highland migration was along the west coast of the island (the opposite of Isle Madame),

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<sup>143</sup> Morgan, "Orphan Outpost," 94.

<sup>144</sup> Vibert, "Cape Breton Island, 1843," 15.

<sup>145</sup> Morgan, "Orphan Outpost," 196.

stretching from Port Hawkesbury to Margaree Forks. However, the Highlander population along the River Inhabitants began to grow and expand towards Arichat and Isle Madame. While examining the population distribution maps that Morgan provides in his PhD thesis, it is important to remember that each of these symbols on the maps examined represent 25 members of the associated population. Thus, just because a symbol is not located in the area, it does not mean that the population was not represented there. An example of this can be displayed by viewing the list of Loyalists in Cape Breton, which states that Naval Officer, George Moore, who hailed from Ireland, moved to Greater Arichat, Richmond County.<sup>146</sup> The date of his arrival was not listed, but in the Cape Breton Island Land Petitions, there was a record of one Hon. George Moore requesting land along Arichat Harbour in 1804 and then more in 1811 behind his current lot.<sup>147</sup> On the population distribution map of 1810, there was nothing to distinguish that a Loyalist was located in Arichat. Therefore, as helpful as these maps are to get an understanding of the migration patterns, they are not flawless.

During this time, Richmond County was more diversified than it had been before. The ‘other’ populace, which was most likely other European populations, were re-locating westward towards the Acadian-dominated areas of Isle Madame and River Inhabitants. The Acadian population of River Inhabitants was becoming outnumbered by the Highland Scots and this trend had a lasting effect on this community. By 1820, River Inhabitants was essentially all Scottish.<sup>148</sup> It appears the Scottish population has integrated into the Acadian communities in Richmond County. Communities such as St. Peter’s went from having minimal if any, Highland Scots in the

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<sup>146</sup> For the Loyalist list see Robert J. Morgan, “The Loyalist of Cape Breton,” *Dalhousie Review* 55:1 (1975) located in the sections “List of Cape Breton Loyalist,” pg. 20.

<sup>147</sup> Commissioner of Public Records Nova Scotia Archives, *Cape Breton Land Petitions, 1787-1843*, “Moore.” (accessed on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020 <https://novascotia.ca/archives/land/results.asp?Search=moore&SearchList1=3>).

<sup>148</sup> Morgan, “Orphan Outpost,” 216.

region to being surrounded by Scottish settlers. The communities of Fourchu and St. Esprit were also witnessing a cluster of Highland Scots inching closer towards their communities as well. The other populations that were once located near St. Peter's have re-located in the Isle Madame area, creating a region that has a combination of Acadians, Highland Scots, and other cultures tied together. Within ten years, southeastern Cape Breton went from being a predominately Acadian region, isolated from the other British settlers to becoming a diverse region that witnessed a great influx in British settlers into communities such as Arichat and St. Peter's. These population maps are integral to demonstrating how diverse these communities were becoming throughout the later years of the eighteenth-century and into the nineteenth century. Again, the Acadians were in the center of an evolving world and to survive they needed to reach beyond their own people. The influx of British settlers meant that the dynamics of these communities were changing.

Throughout the nineteenth century, records were much more organized and updated when it came to populations within Cape Breton communities. For the year of 1811, there are available census records for multiple communities within the southeastern region of Cape Breton. By combining local parishes, these documents offer insight into the shifting populations that these communities were seeing. In these census records, they provide the head of the household name, which was the male name for the family. This does not provide a complete picture into the understanding of these families as the female names are not listed, or the maiden names, however, it still provided valuable information into the community construct. In the 1811 census returns for River Bourgeois and St. Peter's, there was a mixture of Acadian names along with English names.<sup>149</sup> This census revealed that the majority of the English-named individuals were residing

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<sup>149</sup> Commissioner of Public Records Nova Scotia Archives, RG 1, vol. 445 no. 9, Census Returns, 1811, 1817, and 1818: River Bourgeois and St. Peter's. <https://novascotia.ca/archives/census/resultsRG1v445.asp?Search=no%2E+9&Start=16>. (Accessed on April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020).

in St. Peter's, while the Acadian-named families were predominately in River Bourgeois. However, in St. Peter's, the name of Laurence Kavanagh was listed. As noted above, Kavanagh Jr. was married to an Acadian woman, Felicité LeJeune, and as a successful merchant he exerted considerable control over a large portion of the island, including the St. Peter's region. Furthermore, examining the occupations listed for the French dwellers in River Bourgeois, the majority are fishermen or mariners. For example, the first two names under the River Bourgeois heading are Peter John Landry and Benoit Landry, a mariner and a fisherman respectively.<sup>150</sup> In a region that was predominately operated and controlled by the largest merchant in the region, Laurence Kavanagh, although no records have been located to support this, there was a strong possibility that these individuals would have had some contact or working relationship alongside their counterparts in St. Peter's or with Kavanagh directly.

The 1811 census returns for Arichat also provided some interesting information into the expansion of this community. In this census, the majority of the individuals listed maintained French surnames. One individual of interest is John Le Rossignal. This individual was listed as the captain for the Petit de Grat militia and the comments made about him indicate that he was a Huguenot from Jersey.<sup>151</sup> The Huguenot aspect is interesting because he was the captain of the local militia in a community that the majority of the population were Acadian Catholics. With the emergence of these settlers residing in this community, this may indicate that there was some Protestant in-migration to the area. This information also provided insight into the operations of the Jersey merchants who operated businesses in the community. Le Rossignal was also listed as an agent for the Janvrin Co. and with the apparent success in Arichat and Petit de Grat, this is

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> Morgan, "Orphan Outpost," 205. This chart of militia units in Cape Breton and their Captains is from an 1813 report from Hugh Swayne. The citation for this chart is listed as: Hugh Swayne Papers, M.G. 24, A5, Vol. 2, pp. 554-573, 576.



interesting information.<sup>152</sup> This is significant because it provides some insight into how the day-to-day operations may have worked for the Jersey companies, such as the Janvrin Co. and the Charles Robin Company, which had established themselves in these communities. They established an agent to reside in the area and control the company on their behalf. With this understanding and the appointment of Le Rossignal as the captain of the local militia, it is fair to state that there had to be interactions amongst him and all members of the community both for the Janvrin Company to maintain success and for the militia to be organized and prepared.

Perhaps one of the most intriguing examples of the evolving community makeup comes from the River Inhabitants area. Before becoming known as River Inhabitants, this area was referred to as Rivière-aux-Habitants due to the large Acadian population based there.<sup>153</sup> This community was a predominately Acadian community, but the 1811 census displays that the social dynamic of this community had changed drastically. Within this census, all of the names listed were of British origins, except for one, Labbey Landrie (Landry).<sup>154</sup> The reasoning for the lack of Acadian representation in this community is unknown. However, by 1811, just one resident with an Acadian surname was remaining in this area. Although the reasons for this drastic change are not clear, what is interesting was the fact that Landrie is the final Acadian connection, by name, to this community and had not re-located despite the community being English. In order to survive economically within such a small community, it should also be considered that Landrie would have had daily interactions with his neighbours. What this census does not display was the possibility of Acadian women who remain in this community but had married British men. Thus,

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<sup>152</sup> Morgan, "Orphan Outpost," 205.

<sup>153</sup> Johnston, *Storied Shores*, 53.

<sup>154</sup> Commissioner of Public Records Nova Scotia Archives, RG 1 vol. 445 no. 3, Census Returns 1811, 1817, and 1818: Carrabucu (Port Malcome and Port Richmond) and River Inhabitants, (Canada: Government of Canada); <https://novascotia.ca/archives/census/resultsRG1v445.asp?Search=no.+3>. (Accessed on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019).

this may indicate that the British and Acadian past unstable relations were not a factor anymore. There are endless, speculative possibilities for what happened in this community however, this was one of the areas in which these records did not give an answer or indication.

The population was becoming diverse within southeastern Cape Breton by the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century. According to the population distribution maps, the region saw a large influx in Highland Scots re-locating within Acadian communities. Unfortunately, these maps do not show specifics when it comes to community make-up and who was living amongst these communities in total. However, in 1813, under the guidance of the newly-appointed British administrator in Cape Breton, Major-General, Hugh Swayne, a report was conducted that recorded the men capable of bearing arms for the security of the island.<sup>155</sup> Aside from the obvious protection benefits of the militia, the social aspect of them are intriguing for this research. As Elizabeth Mancke stated, there are various social benefits to militias. Mancke claimed that they are more inclusive than religion or ethnicity, that denominational adversaries trained and worked together, and linguistic and racialized populations found common purpose while in a militia regiment.<sup>156</sup> Thus, understanding these reports are integral for this research. With this understanding, the members of militia units would have trained together and had numerous interactions. Although British Government decided to form these militias units in Cape Breton and not the individuals of the communities doing so, as the records show, these units were not divided into Acadian or British units, they were a combination of all members of the local society brought together.

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<sup>155</sup> R. J. Morgan, "SWAYNE, HUGH," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 7, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003. (Accessed April 2, 2020, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/swayne\\_hugh\\_7E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/swayne_hugh_7E.html)).

<sup>156</sup> Elizabeth Mancke, "The Militia and Civic Community in Colonial New Brunswick: Part I, 1786-1816," *Borealia* (Accessed on August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020: <https://earlycanadianhistory.ca/2020/05/18/the-militia-and-civic-community-in-colonial-new-brunswick-part-i-1786-1816/>).

The communities in the southeastern region were divided into militia companies, with some smaller communities amalgamating for one large division. These records listed the following information for each company: the captain of the company, the names of the men, their age, place of birth, residence, occupation, prior length of service, the acreage of their land, and whether their land was a grant or lease.<sup>157</sup> Furthermore, the only information regarding their families that was listed in the records was the number of women, boys, girls, and the total number of people in the household. With the available records through the “Cape Breton Gen Web Project” online source, the communities within southeastern Cape Breton that were examined were the following: St. Peter’s, Arichat, L’Ardoise, River Inhabitants, and Isle Madame. Major-General Swayne re-organized the militias and divided the island into fifteen divisions, the 1<sup>st</sup> division through to the 8<sup>th</sup> division dealing with communities within Richmond County. The first piece of information that was interesting regarding the militia roll calls was the listed captains of each. These individuals have varying backgrounds, including Acadian, Irish, Jersey heritage, which demonstrates the changing make-up of these communities. As the list of captains and their units below demonstrates, some of these communities had a militia captain that corresponded with the area’s populace while others were led by a captain of another ethnicity who either held a position of power or wealth in their respective communities.

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<sup>157</sup> National Archives of Canada, *Hugh Swayne Papers* “Cape Breton Militia Papers, ‘A Return Showing the Number of Men Capable of Bearing Arms in Cape Breton,’” dated Sydney, 1 June 1813. (Accessed October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019: <http://www.capebretongenweb.com/militndx.html>). These sources have been transcribed and contributed to the online source “Cape Breton Gen Web Project,” by Lark Szick. These have been confirmed legitimate by an employee at the National Archives of Canada prior to being used for this thesis. Unfortunately, not all of the records are available through the online source.

<b>Militia Unit</b>	<b>Captain</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Born in CB</b>	<b>Born Other</b>
First Military Division. (L'Ardoise and St. Peter's).	Anthony Mombourquette	Acadian surname.	Cape Breton	
Second Military Division. (River Bourgeois, St. Peter's, and Lennox Passage).	Laurence Kavanagh Jr.	Irish Merchant.  One of the largest in Cape Breton with main operations in St. Peter's.  Married an Acadian woman.	Cape Breton	
Third Military Division. (Greater Arichat).	Clement Hubert	A Huguenot.  Hubert was also listed as Justice of Peace in 1811 Census Rolls		Robert Morgan Lists him as being from Jersey
Sixth Military Division. (Greater Arichat).	John Jean	Merchant		Jersey
Seventh Military Division. (Grand Digue and D'Escousse).	Simon Babin	Acadian Surname.	Cape Breton	
Eighth Military Division. (River Inhabitants, Bear River, and Gut of Canso).	John Higgins	Land Surveyor from Ireland & School Master.		Ireland

Captain Anthony Mambourquet (Mombourquette) was the officer in charge of the First Military Division for the Cape Breton Militia. This regiment was a combination of men primarily from Ardoise (L'Ardoise) and a few from St. Peter's. Within this report, the population within the regiment boundaries was 205, broken down as such: 51 men listed, 35 women, 56 boys, and 63 girls.<sup>158</sup> Initially what stands out was the fact that this militia regiment was under the command of an Acadian gentleman. Since Cape Breton was a British colony at this time, it is intriguing to see an Acadian leading a local militia with the understanding of defending this colony if called upon. Of the 51 men listed, 41 have their place of birth listed as Cape Breton. Within this list of men, the majority have Acadian surnames; the three dominating names are Mombourquette, Sampson, and Martell. The other ten consist of places such as France, Miquelon, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and Ireland.<sup>159</sup> L'Ardoise and St. Peter's were both French communities that housed Acadians before the Grand Dérangement. Therefore, it was not unusual for them to return in an attempt to regain their land and remain in close proximity to their families. However, the individuals from Quebec, Nova Scotia, and Ireland are intriguing because four of them have the same surname, McFee. The records do not state if these individuals were related to one another, but they were not Acadian surnames. The fifth individual, who hails from Ireland, bears the name Patrick Powers. The militia record reveals that the most common occupation within this list was fisherman or mariner, with 44 of the men bearing these occupations. With regards to Patrick Powers, he was the only individual in this community who had the title of cooper. A cooper was an individual who repaired or built barrels. In a community that was dominated by the fishing

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<sup>158</sup> Cape Breton Gen Web Project, source: Cape Breton Militia Papers: "A Return showing the Number of men Capable of Bearing Arms in Cape Breton." Dated Sydney, 1<sup>st</sup> June 1813. Hugh Swayne Papers at the National Archives of Canada (NAC, MG 24). (Accessed on March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020 [http://www.capebretongenweb.com/1813\\_1.html](http://www.capebretongenweb.com/1813_1.html)).

<sup>159</sup> Cape Breton Gen Web Project, [http://www.capebretongenweb.com/1813\\_1.html](http://www.capebretongenweb.com/1813_1.html).

industry, barrels were a necessity for those involved in the fishing industry. Being the only cooper listed in the community, according to the militia records, implies that Powers provided an important service to the populace and because of him being the only one to provide this service, Powers must have had interactions or business relations with the local fishermen and mariners in the community.

On the other side of St. Peter's, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division militia unit was formed from men residing in River Bourgeois, St. Peter's, and Lennox Passage. The commanding officer of this division was the influential Irish merchant of St. Peter's, Laurence Kavanagh. Despite St. Peter's being one of the earliest communities established by the Acadians during their migration years to Cape Breton, it was a vibrant economic hub due to its canal and waterways and was an essential location for the British in establishing success in the cod fishery. Thus, at the time of these militia censuses, the diversity within this community provides evidence of the emergence of British subjects residing directly within these Acadian communities. The communities that combine to form this militia unit were early Acadian establishments. By analyzing the names listed, there was still a large Acadian presence with names such as Sampson, Bouche(r), Foshear (Fougere), and Landry. However, other listed names prove the diversification of these communities. In River Bourgeois there was a Peters family, who hailed from Prince Edward Island, a carpenter named William Robertson from the West Indies, and a group of Burkes, an Irish surname, who claimed a place of birth from Cape Breton.<sup>160</sup>

In St. Peter's there were the coopers William and George Sutherland listed, who hailed from Nova Scotia and Cape Breton respectively. Although not listed as family, the likelihood was high that they were. William, the eldest, was also listed as having eight years of military service.

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<sup>160</sup> This can also be the anglicization of 'Bourque.' There is no evidence suggesting that these individuals were French and had their names Anglicized.

William Laffort, who hailed from Prussia, was a tailor with six years of military experience. David Riely hailed from Ireland and had seven years of military service. Finally, for St. Peter's, there was a Francis Murphy from Ireland and a Hans Lindoff from Sweden, who were both farmers. In Lennox Passage, there were four individuals listed and all hailed from outside of Cape Breton. Thomas Thomas was a Welsh farmer with four years of military experience. Daniel Kavanagh was from Ireland while Hector McNeil and John McNeil hailed from N. Britain (North Britain). Clearly, these close communities had a variety of cultural backgrounds. There were Acadians living amongst many British and other European settlers. These lists offer a useful picture of an ever-changing community dynamic that was shaping Cape Breton at this time.

There were two militia units for Greater Arichat which demonstrated the growth of this community and the lists exemplify these shifting dynamics. To start, the captain of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division of Greater Arichat militia was Clement Hubert, a Huguenot from Jersey and a customs collector.<sup>161</sup> The 1811 Cape Breton Census Rolls also lists Hubert as Justice of Peace.<sup>162</sup> With the obvious presence of the Jersey fishermen in the region of Arichat, Hubert was most likely appointed the customs collection position from the Jersey businessmen and with this power, gained the designation of Captain from the British authorities on the island. To no surprise, Acadian names predominately form most of the list for this region, however, there were names listed that have a place of birth stated as Jersey, Ireland, and France. Thus, having French residents and settlers from two British colonies, Jersey and Ireland, residing in close proximity of one another, displays the evolving dynamic of Arichat and further exemplifies Arichat beginning to experience a more diverse population.

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<sup>161</sup> Huguenot's were French Protestants. According to Robert Morgan's research, Clement Hubert was a customs collector and Huguenot in. Information can be found in "Orphan Outpost," 205.

<sup>162</sup> Nova Scotia Archives, Census Returns.

Similar to the other militia records, the majority of the men in this community were listed as being fishermen or mariners. However, what separates Arichat from the others was the different occupations that were listed and what they suggest about the pace of development there when compared to neighbouring villages. For example, within this report, there were two coopers, a physician, a few traders, and a victualler. What was even more intriguing was that the majority of these professions listed were being occupied by non-Acadian settlers. Of the two coopers, one holds an Acadian name (Huro), while the other was listed as John Jones.<sup>163</sup> In a community where fishing dominates the importance of barrels and other fishing equipment reinforce the importance of having local coopers. Thus, these two individuals provided an integral service to the local businesses. As with all communities, a local doctor was a vital service for all community members. In Arichat, Anthony Noel, a Frenchman, was the local physician. As the only listed physician in Arichat, a community that was growing and becoming a hub for the cod fishery during this time, his services had to be available to all for their survival and the health of the overall community. French historian Phillipe Ariès, suggested that during the nineteenth century, the connection to death began to sway away from religion due to the changes within the culture and structure of family. Due to this, medical men began to replace clergymen on the bedside of those dying.<sup>164</sup> The records of James Miles Langstaff, an Ontario born and trained doctor in the nineteenth century show, they were heavily relied upon within communities to treat a wide variety of medical issues

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<sup>163</sup> Although he is listed from Cape Breton, the Cape Breton Land Petitions in the Nova Scotia Archives has a request from a Johnathan Jones who came to Cape Breton with his Loyalist Father, in 1784. He was hoping to acquire land with the intent of erecting a sawmill.

<sup>164</sup> David Clarke, *To Comfort Always: A history of palliative medicine since the nineteenth century*, (England: Oxford University Press, 2016) accessed through Oxford Medicine Online [<https://oxfordmedicine.com/view/10.1093/med/9780199674282.001.0001/med-9780199674282-chapter-1?print=pdf>] (November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020); 2.



and they were also heavily in demand.<sup>165</sup> Based on these accounts, the physician during this time was beginning to replace some religious traditions and was heavily relied on by the community members for their overall health and concerns.

The three local traders are all from British colonies. The trader Robert Brickmaster hailed from Ireland while both of the traders John Jean and George Sivret were from Jersey. The local victualler was an Acadian, Michael Foret.<sup>166</sup> A local tavern in this working community must have been the epicentre for entertainment and social gatherings. As Arichat was continuing to become a hub for the cod fishery, the incoming merchants, the local population, and re-locating British businesses brought an array of ethnicities together in one village. One final interesting aspect of this militia was the listing of George Moore. This individual was also listed on the Cape Breton Loyalist list, a list of Loyalists who arrived in Cape Breton, and was described as being born in Ireland and served as a Naval Officer for ten years. Most interestingly, Moore was listed as the Deputy Customs Collector (Arichat) within the Statement of Salaried Cape Breton Officials paperwork.<sup>167</sup> In this role, Moore most likely would have been operating out of the port area of Arichat and dealing with the arrival and records of the ships. Since Arichat was becoming a popular and busy port, Moore would have had daily interactions with individuals of all backgrounds.

The second militia unit for Greater Arichat was the 6<sup>th</sup> Division, which was commanded by John Jean. Once again, Arichat was a useful example of British settlers coming to these Acadian communities and providing services that were beneficial to all who reside there. In this roll call, some individuals originate from the United States (US), England, Prussia, Jersey, and Ireland.

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<sup>165</sup> Jacalyn Duffin, "A Rural Practice in Nineteenth-Century Ontario: The Continuing Medical Education of James Miles Langstaff," *CBMH/BCHM* Volume 5 (1988); 6.

<sup>166</sup> According to Merriam-Webster dictionary, a victualler has a couple of definitions. Including "the keeper of a restaurant or tavern." *Merriam-Webster*, "Victualler," <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/victualler>.

<sup>167</sup> For the salary list see Morgan, "Orphan Outpost," 178.

Robert Malcolm, from England, was a blacksmith. A blacksmith was a valuable member of the community and was likely serving the needs of the entire populace. A blacksmith often provided all the steel and metal needs for a community. Products such as nails, tools, and repairs for wagons or horseshoes came from the local blacksmiths. There was also a blacksmith listed from France, Thomas Le Noir, and one could argue that perhaps one served the Acadians and one served the English, but without the business records for either, multiple scenarios can be suggested, including the two working together to serve all members. A Prussian national, Christopher Marks, was listed as being a shoemaker – once again, another member of a community that offers a service that would benefit all members.

The final two militia roll calls focus on the communities of Grand Digue and Escousse (D'Escousse) and the community of River Inhabitants. The social dynamics of the many communities on Isle Madame were beginning to shift and Grand Digue and D'Escousse were no exceptions. Both being much smaller communities, rather than towns such as Arichat, the occupations listed amongst the residents in these communities were fishermen, farmers, and mariners. This suggests the possibility that these communities relied on the services available in the larger towns nearby, most likely Arichat due to its proximity. Of the 67 men listed within this roll call, only eight have non-Acadian or French names. Interestingly, of these eight men, only two were listed as being born outside of Cape Breton. One was a fisherman, named John Clements, from the US and the other was Edward McDonald, another fisherman who came from Newfoundland.

The roll calls for River Inhabitants, Bear River, and Gut of Canso, display a marked contrast to the other southeastern militias. The captain of this militia unit was John Higgins, who

was listed as a Land Surveyor from Ireland.<sup>168</sup> The community of River Inhabitants, previously referred to as Riviere-aux-Habitants,<sup>169</sup> may have witnessed the largest change in their community due to the large migration of Scottish immigrants from mainland Nova Scotia.<sup>170</sup> Before the transition of becoming a predominately Scottish community, River Inhabitants had a large Acadian presence. However, as the militia roll call for this community demonstrates, this was no longer the case by 1813. Throughout the numerous British names listed within the list, there were only two Acadian farmers. The complete takeover of this community by British settlers was not the only difference between this community and the others in Richmond County. The other communities were primarily fishermen or professions that were focused around the use of the sea. In River Inhabitants, the primary occupation was agriculture. Aside from a few coopers in the community, the remaining men were listed as being farmers. There are no records that could be located to prove business relations between these essential services and local Acadian individuals. The services provided by these British settlers contribute to the economic and overall survival of all members within the community. Therefore, it was highly plausible that the two Acadian families in this community had to do business with these British coopers to successfully operate their farms.

The source used for this thesis was missing information for two militia units based within Isle Madame. These units were the 4<sup>th</sup> Military Division and the 5<sup>th</sup> Military Division, consisting of Little Arichat and Petit de Grat respectively. According to Robert Morgan, for the Fourth Military Division, the captain was Victor Terrio, an Acadian resident. For the Fifth Military Division, the Captain was John Le Rossignal, who Morgan has listed as a Huguenot from Jersey.<sup>171</sup> Le Rosignal was also listed in the 1811 census Rolls as an agent to Janvrin & Co.

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<sup>168</sup> Militia Roll Call for River Inhabitants, Bear River, and Gut of Canso.

<sup>169</sup> Johnston, *Storied Shores*, 53.

<sup>170</sup> Morgan, *Rise Again!*, 85.

<sup>171</sup> Morgan, "Orphan Outpost," 205.

The militia records and census returns reveal that these communities were beginning to diversify. With the names listed, their place of birth, and their occupations, a better understanding of how these communities were beginning to transform and grow emerges. The inability of these records to show how close these individuals resided was a limitation, but the Cape Breton Land Petitions fill in some gaps. The firsthand letters of land request offer primary insight into the thoughts of those requesting land and these letters can also contain information that confirm prior knowledge to the individual requesting property close to or adjoining to someone of a different ethnic background. Fortunately, some of the petition documents include maps which shows the land requested and who or what occupied plots in the vicinity.

Arichat was beginning to evolve as a town due to the success of the cod fishery and the influx in populations re-locating there. Being considered as a hub of the cod fishery and drawing the attention of British merchants, the community ethnicity was shifting as well. Once foes, the incoming British population were now becoming neighbours with the Acadian families living within the region. This was evident within the first land petition map.<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management (NSARM), "Cape Breton Island Petitions, 1787-1843," No.: 551, Mic. Film: 15790 (1810).

RG20 Series B  
Vol. 3 #551



Road to Dunedin  
Bartholomew Town

Joseph Babu, Peter Boudrot, John Hubert, Joseph Hubert, Robert Hubert  
Pine, Niguan and Frangipane. May 1841. 11 Acres. About 2/3 are fit for Cultivation  
N. 7. E. 85 Chains

Christopher Marks

Road to Rocky Bay

John Boudrot  
Simon Babu

Antonio's Barraswa

Arichat Harbour

Sydney 9th Dec 1840  
W. M. H. G. G. G.

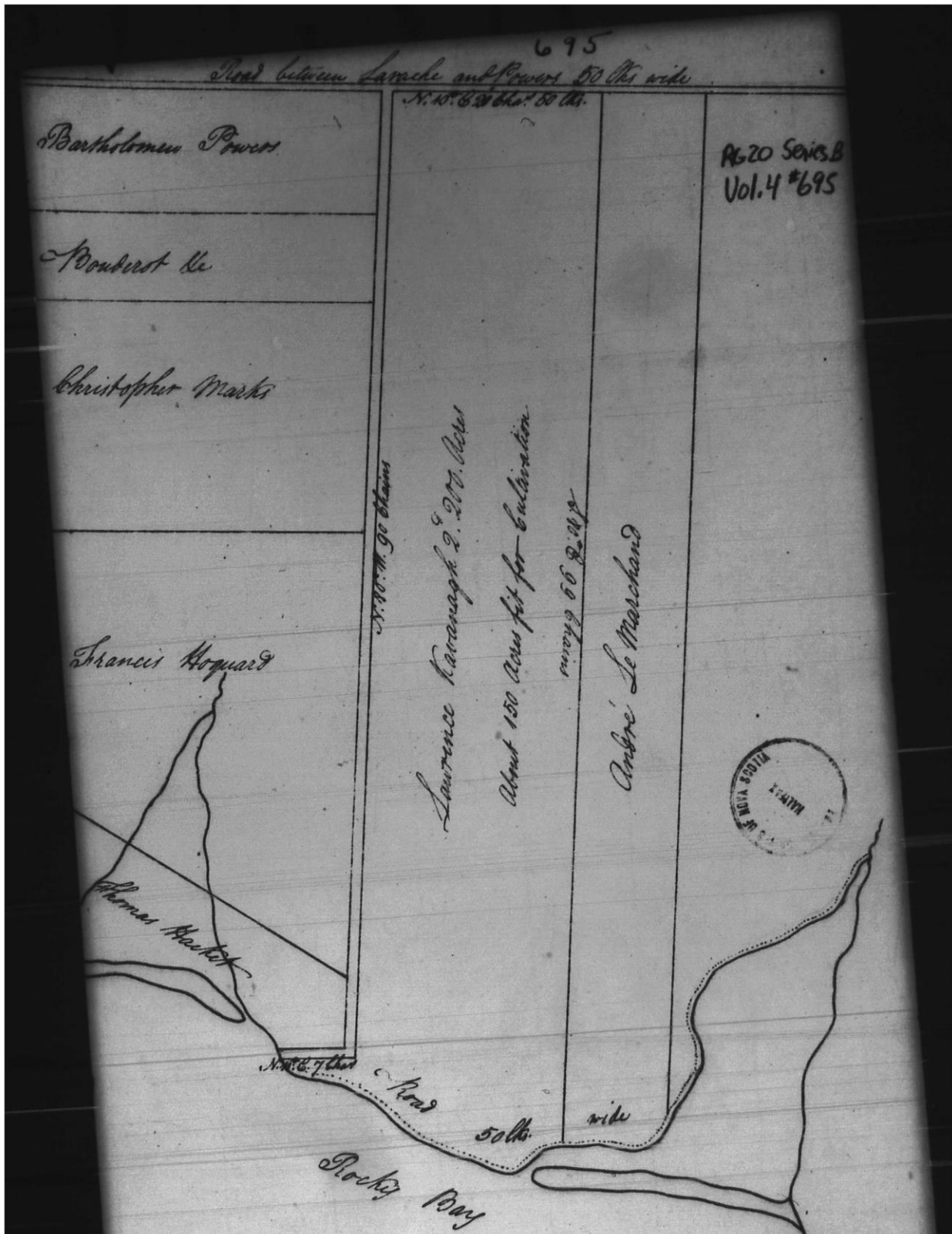
Scale 20 Chains to an Inch.

The above land request was issued in 1810, by a group of Acadians. The collective of Acadian men were requesting 88 Acres on the Arichat harbour. A few of the individuals listed in this group were Joseph Babin, Peter Boudrot, John Hubert, Joseph Hubert, Robert Hubert, Rene Vigneau, and Frabcoise Mayotte. In the 1813 Militia Roll call, all but two of these individuals were listed – the Huberts being listed as Heberts – and all the men were denoted as mariners. The land they were requesting was located between two individuals who did not possess Acadian names. To their left, the land title was listed to Bartholomew Powers, a common Irish surname. To their right, the land was listed to owner Christopher Marks. Again, the 1811 census returns for Arichat, Little Arichat, and Petit Des Grat, provide information regarding this individual. In the census returns, Marks was listed as shoemaker and in the 1813 Militia Roll Calls, it states that he had been born in Prussia. Directly across from the property requested by the Acadian men, the titled landowners of this property were John Boudrot and Simon Babin, who were also listed as mariners in 1813 militia roll call.

This small area was a prime example of the diversity within these communities. Within these lots of land, there was a mixture of Acadian mariners, Irish settlers, and a Prussian shoemaker. In continuation with this area, the map below displays the other side of the properties. On the other side, Laurence Kavanagh Jr., the largest merchant on the island, was the titled owner of land that runs concurrent to the properties previously discussed. Furthermore, his property was adjoined by land titled to André Le'Marchand, another individual with a French surname.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management (NSARM), "Cape Breton Island Petitions, 1787-1843," no.: 383a, Mic. Film: 15789, (1808).



Evidently with Kavanagh marrying into an Acadian family, it was clear that inter-ethnic marriages were taking place. With his wife being Acadian, it would not be unusual for them to occupy land within Acadian communities. Furthermore, Kavanagh being one of, if not the, biggest merchant on the island, he was most likely operating his business within this community and providing employment for the local mariners in the community.

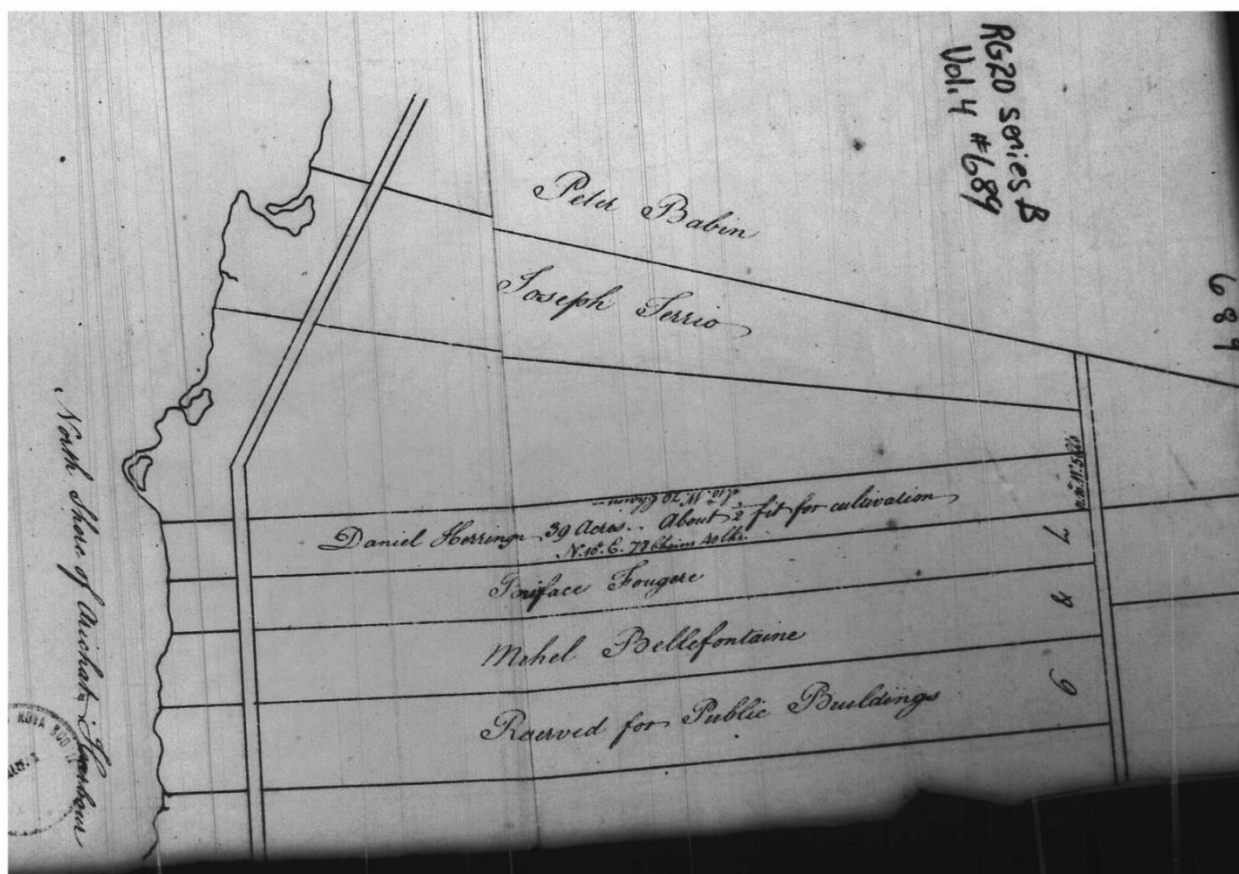
Further exemplifying the integration of British and Irish settlers within Acadian societies, a land petition by an individual named Daniel Herrington is evidence of prior knowledge of his neighbours as well as the community that he was asking to reside in. In his letter of request to Major General Nicholas Nepean, who was then the appointed administrator of Cape Breton,<sup>174</sup> it was clear what piece of land Herrington was requesting, as well, he clearly acknowledges that this property was adjoined to Boniface Fougere, an Acadian mariner. This recognition of knowing his neighbour was an Acadian resident suggests that there was no concern regarding their past ill-relations and rocky past. Furthermore, as the map below displays, Herrington was not only requesting a piece of land next to an Acadian, he was requesting land in an area that was surrounded by Acadian families.<sup>175</sup> Within his immediate vicinity, Herrington was living amongst the aforementioned Boniface Fougere, Michel Bellefontaine, an Acadian mariner, Joseph Terrio, and Peter Babin. Evidently, the area in which Herrington had requested land was predominately Acadian residents and he would have been the only English-speaking resident in the immediate area.

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<sup>174</sup> A brief history of Major General Nicholas Nepean can be found at:  
[http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/nepean\\_nicholas\\_6E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/nepean_nicholas_6E.html).

<sup>175</sup> Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management (NSARM), "Cape Breton Island Petitions, 1787-1843," No.: 689, Mic. Film: 15790 (1811).



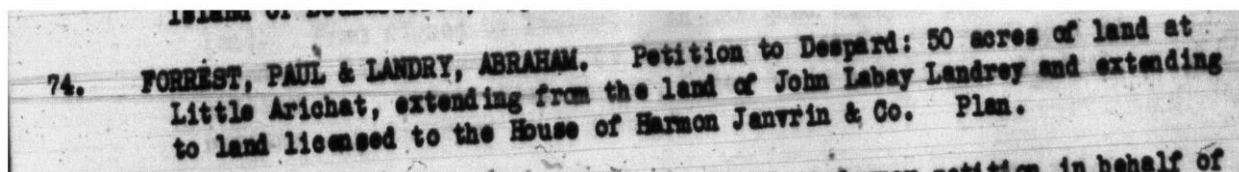


Despite being unable to locate resources that provide evidence of British merchants hiring or paying Acadian individuals for their services, these maps provide other insights into this scenario. For example, the maps do suggest that there was a working relationship amongst the two as the British businesses or merchants would often offer a service that many of the local residents relied upon. In the image below, the Janvrin company was listed as owning two pieces of waterfront property.<sup>176</sup>

<sup>176</sup> Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management (NSARM), "Cape Breton Island Petitions, 1787-1843," no.: 174, Mic. Film: 15789, (1805).



Their land was separated by one piece of property being listed to an Acadian by the name of Michael Bouderot, who was listed as a mariner in the 1811 census roll of Cape Breton. Although they were British companies, they were being established directly within Acadian communities and amongst the predominately Acadian population. Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that Acadian individuals had no issues in requesting land beside or near these British merchants. The description below was from a land request from Paul Forrest and Abraham Landry, who were petitioning for a piece of property that extended from Acadian John Labay Landrey's property to land that was licensed to the House of Harmon Janvrin & Co.<sup>177</sup> This request demonstrates prior knowledge and recognition of their potential move requiring them to reside or operate in close proximity to either the Janvrin company business or next to an agent who may occupy the companies land.



The sheer size and monetary power that these companies had accumulated prior to their relocation to these Cape Breton communities most likely meant that they would dominate the fishery in the area and have these local mariners and fishermen working for them in some form. With their business being located in the middle of these communities, this suggests that they would have had a significant role in the local population to setup in these communities and not in the outskirts or in central locations. As mentioned above, many of the fishermen relied upon these companies due

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<sup>177</sup> Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management (NSARM), "Cape Breton Island Petitions, 1787-1843," No.: 74, Mic. Film: 15788 (1803).

to the truck system of fishing. This would coincide with the idea as to why these companies had property directly within these communities.

With Arichat being considered the hub for the cod fishery, it provides a useful overview of the ever-changing population landscape that Cape Breton was witnessing. Evidently from the militia records and census reports, other communities along the southeastern region of Cape Breton were also going through significant changes. The community of St. Peter's was one of the earliest communities settled by the Acadian settlers, making it a predominately Acadian community. It is known that the Kavanaghs did have business operations within St. Peter's. As the militia records displayed, both Lawrence Kavanagh and Acadian, Anthony Mombourquette were captains of their respective militia units in the St. Peter's area. It was apparent that this community was diverse in the population ethnicity, but the map below also displays visual evidence of such. In the below land map, there were two properties listed to an Edward McDonald and John Jean.<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> NSARM, "Cape Breton Island Petitions," no.: 491.



The name John Jean was of interest in this map because he was a Jersey merchant. According to the Hugh Swayne Papers, John Jean was the captain of the militia in Big Arichat and was son-in-law to Clement Hubert, a Jersey Huguenot, who was a customs collector.<sup>179</sup> Therefore, this was another example of a British merchant residing within a community pre-dominantly occupied by Acadian residents. The Huguenot aspect was interesting as well, as most of the Acadians and other British settlers during this time were primarily of the Catholic faith. In this instance, there was a Protestant, British settler, occupying land within a predominately Acadian and catholic community. Furthermore, Jean was much more than a merchant. He was a British settler who had family relations with individuals of great power in Cape Breton suggesting that his status was in the upper echelon of society.

The militia records and land petition maps offer a visual understanding as to the community development and social construct of these communities. These two documents complement one another extremely well when explaining the diversification of these southeastern Cape Breton communities. The militia records displayed names, occupations, place of birth, and important notes on these individuals who were enlisted within the communal militias. Consulting these records, it became evident that these communities that were once dominated by Acadian occupancy had evolved in both size and cultural diversity. The occupations of the community members listed in these militia records also provided evidence that these communities were evolving. These communities had essential services being offered by few members of the community, meaning that interactions and working relations amongst all individuals must have been established. Although the militia records do not offer a visual illustration as to the close proximity that some of these community members resided, this was where the land petition maps assist in providing a clearer

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<sup>179</sup> Hugh Swayne Papers, M.G. 24, A5, Vol. 2, pp. 554-73, 576. Information found in Robert Morgan's "Orphan Outpost," pg. 205. He is also listed as a Justice of Peace in the Census Returns of 1811.

representation. By consulting these land maps, it becomes evident that these communities were small and that residents with various cultural backgrounds were asking for and residing on property next to members with different backgrounds.

## Chapter Four

Analyzing the history of the Acadian population in southeastern Cape Breton presents an argument that provides insight into a more complex relationship between the Acadians and British. The relationship between the two was far more complex than the initial understanding. Much of the scholarly work surrounding the connection between the two has focused on the tension and negative dimensions between them. This approach is understandable as one of the most noteworthy events in Atlantic Canada history was the 1755 Expulsion of the Acadians at the hands of the British authorities. Aside from this grand event, much of the other scholarly work focuses on the Acadians ability to establish their own unique identity that enabled them to separate themselves and maintain their independence from French, British, and other European settlers. When the Acadians first migrated to Nova Scotia, they relied on their adaptiveness to survive off the land and resources available to them while attempting to establish relations with local indigenous and European populations. They maintained this mindset when they began their new journey in Cape Breton and successfully exploited the cod fishery.

Due to the limited land that was able to be cultivated in Cape Breton, many of the Acadians turned to the next available resource, cod. Their success in this industry began to draw the attention of British merchants who were attempting to re-settle and re-establish the local economy for their new colony. It was with this vision that the Acadian communities witnessed a large influx in British settlers integrating within their communities. As this thesis has proven, many of these British settlers were merchants, or others who offered essential services to these communities such as blacksmith, cooper, doctor, and shoemaker to name a few. Furthermore, many of these British merchants were establishing local business in these communities and many were supplying the



local Acadian fishermen with supplies and economic support. Although the system that was in place often times meant that the Acadian fishermen were often in debt to these merchants, there was still a working relationship being established between the two. This cooperation within the cod fishery led to communities such as Arichat, Petit de Grat, and St. Peter's, becoming hubs for imports and cod exports. These communities would see ships and merchants from all across the globe for their stock of cod.

Although it was tough to locate business records or marriage records for this era, there are other sources that offer insight into the evolving diversity within the populace of these communities. The militia records, census returns, and other societal documents are important resources to consult. These documents show the diversity in ethnicity that was beginning to take place in these communities and how these small villages were beginning to transform into smaller towns with services of varying degrees being offered. The sources used for this thesis indicate that the once-dominant Acadian communities along the southeastern coast of Cape Breton began to witness a large presence of immigrants from British by the turn of the nineteenth century. With the support of the Acadians, the British were able to re-establish a successful cod industry on Cape Breton.

With this success, the British government had to ensure the safety and protection of the citizens. This began the establishments of local militias. The formations of militias go much further than simply protection reasons. As stated in this thesis, their training and organization meant that all members of the unit were commonly involved in activities and interactions with one another. Militia units were one of few places that saw the interaction or gathering of all members of the unit, no matter the creed or ethnicity. Therefore, the Acadian and British members of these militias.

Furthermore, in order to maintain a successful militia and functioning communities, there had to be mutual or working relations established.

Finally, the Cape Breton Island Land Petitions maps provide a visual understanding of the changing population along with visual representation of the proximity of these individuals. These maps prove that British settlers were re-locating to Acadian communities and were not always residing in segregated sections of the community. The few examples in this thesis demonstrate that British settlers and merchants were being integrated directly into these communities and in many cases were living beside or within close proximity to each other. In order for these communities to function and have British individuals living next to Acadian individuals, relationships of some extent had to be established. These communities are far too small for there to be no contact with their neighbours. Within some of the documents, such as the petition for land clipping of Paul Forrest and Abraham Landry requesting land next to Harmon Janvrin & Co., this provides proof of prior knowledge and recognition of who they were going to be residing or operating a business beside.

The majority of these communities during this time period were small enough that one individual who offered an essential service would have been providing for all members. As this thesis has revealed, the essential artisans in these communities were of varying backgrounds. As a service needed by most or all members, suggesting that interactions or working relationships between them and members of the community would have had to happen is not farfetched.

This thesis has provided many discussion points and evidence suggesting that the relationship between the Acadians and the British needs to be re-examined. The examination of these relations is needed in order to properly extend and continue to improve the history of the Acadians. The cod fishery of Cape Breton had a large impact on the evolving dynamics of these

communities and in turn, the relationships that were established. As evidence has suggested, this relationship was not always hostile, and the evidence provided in this thesis supports this claim. In order to successfully fulfill the academic literature and historical context of the Acadians, this dynamic must be reconsidered.

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