CHAPTER TWO

ACADIAN AND INDIAN MISSIONS, 1735—1772

1. Introduction

It is said that when the Chinese want to curse a man they tell him, "May you have an exciting history." Because the Spiritans' history in Acadia parallels the gradual conquest of this fertile country and the cruel deportation of its unfortunate people by the British, this Chinese curse followed these priests with such unremitting regularity that a few of them have remained very controversial figures, decried by some as knaves and exalted by others as knights.

It would be flattery to think that this book will end forever two centuries of disagreement. No historical study ever does unless it is concerned with an arid subject that no longer touches the emotions of the reader. While this might be the case in a work which chronicles the death struggle of two warring nations, both long since disappeared from the scenes of history, it could never be true of a poignant conflict like that considered here, in which two great Western powers, Protestant England and Catholic France, waged war for the temporal and spiritual supremacy of Acadia.

To understand this chapter it is necessary to consider the history of Acadia prior to the period which concerns us here. As early as 1604 the land began to be settled by the French, but within a few years the English claimed sovereignty over it, basing their claims on the explorations of John and Sebastian Cabot.1 Torn for decades between the two opposing powers who ruled it in turn, Acadia became French again in 1667 through the Treaty of Breda.2 The British crown, however, was loath to abandon its claims on the country, so that military expeditions continued to contest its possession3 until, by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, France ceded Acadia to England, but kept its other possessions as well

1 Murdoch I, pp. 14 ff., 55 ff.
2 Ibid., I, pp. 74 ff.
3 Ibid., I, p. 140.
Acadia and Surroundings

Gulf of St. Lawrence

New Brunswick

Maine

1.00 Kilometers

100 Miles
Acadian and Indian Missions

as the islands of St. Jean (Prince Edward) and Ile Royale (Cape Breton).4

The peace treaty which France was forced to sign contained several articles that were to give rise to grave misunderstandings and complications. First of all, Acadia, now named Nova Scotia, was ceded to Great Britain "according to its ancient boundaries." This vague formula gave rise to a variety of interpretations: on the one hand, merely the immediate surroundings of Port Royal (Annapolis) or the peninsula, and, on the other, the extreme British claim that the St. John's River, New Brunswick, lies "within the heart of Nova Scotia"5 and that Acadia comprised all the land between Maine and the Saint Lawrence River.6 A boundary commission had been appointed to settle the thorny issue, but was either unable or unwilling to reach an agreement. Thus a large part of the Acadians lived in disputed areas which, however, were actually occupied by either the French or the British.

Secondly, the Treaty of Utrecht gave the Acadians one year to withdraw from the British territory with all their movable goods or become subjects of the British Crown. Those who wanted to stay would have the free exercise of their religion "insofar as the laws of Great Britain allow." When, immediately after this treaty, King Louis XV of France granted freedom to all British Protestants who had been condemned to the galleys, Queen Ann returned his gracious gesture by granting the Acadians the right to stay in the possession of their lands "as fully and freely as other our subjects"7 or to sell them and leave the country. No time limit was attached to either provision.

If Queen Ann thought that the farmer's proverbial attachment to his land would suffice to keep the Acadians

4 Ibid., I, p. 332.
5 Shirley II, p. 482.
7 Murdoch I, p. 333.
in Nova Scotia, she must have been keenly disappointed. Remaining loyal to their king and country and fearing religious persecution, they prepared to leave.\(^8\) Their departure would have left Nova Scotia almost uninhabited except for roving bands of hostile Indians, thus making it impossible for the British to retain control of it. Moreover, the migration of the Acadians to neighboring French-held lands would have strengthened the French to the point of jeopardizing British security in the area.\(^9\)

For this reason the governors of Nova Scotia reneged on the loyal execution of the Treaty of Utrecht. "Governor after Governor refused [the Acadians] the liberty to leave, deprived them of the means of leaving, and kept them in the Province against their will."\(^{10}\) Consequently, they were forced to remain until the conqueror became strong enough to forcefully expel them. As early as 1720, the Lords of Trade wrote from Whitehall to Governor Philipps that "the French inhabitants of Nova Scotia... ought to be removed as soon as the Forces which we have proposed to send to you shall arrive in Nova Scotia for the protection of and the better settlement of your Province."\(^{11}\)

Even before this date there had been question of their removal.\(^{12}\)

Meanwhile, to bind the Acadians in conscience, the conquerors decided to impose upon them an unconditional oath of allegiance to the British Crown.\(^{13}\) Till the very end, however, the Acadians steadfastly refused to take this oath and could be pressured only into swearing fidelity without the duty of taking up arms against their compatriots and the Indians, with whom they lived in peace and harmony. Yet it was their loyalty to this oath

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\(^8\) Vetch to Lords of Trade, 24 Nov., 1714: N.S. Arch., p. 5.
\(^9\) Same letter and Thomas Caulfield to Secretary of State, 3 May, 1715: N.S. Arch., pp. 6 and 8.
\(^{10}\) W. A. Calnek and A. W. Savary, History of the County of Annapolis, and Supplement to... Toronto, 1897 and 1913, Supplement, pp. 17 f.
\(^{11}\) Board of Trade to Governor Philipps, 28 Dec., 1720: N.S. Arch., p. 58.
\(^{13}\) Instruction to Peter Capoon... and Thomas Button, Jan. 1714 (15): N.S. Arch., p. 3.
which prevented them from helping France reconquer Acadia at a time when that venture would easily have succeeded if the Acadians had given it their support.\textsuperscript{14} The British refusal faithfully to execute the Treaty of Utrecht meant that England could not in justice claim all the rights granted by France, for one cannot unqualifiedly claim the benefits of a treaty while reneging on its burdens.

The already complex situation was further aggravated by two factors — religious antagonism and the Indians. Despite the promise of religious freedom, the conqueror’s aim was to protestantize the Acadians. As Governor William Shirley of Massachusetts expressed it, they should “remove the Romish priests out of the Province and introduce Protestant English schools and French Protestant Ministers and give due encouragement to such of the inhabitants as shall conform to the Protestant Religion, and send their children to the English schools... [Thus] the next generation in a great measure [will] become true Protestant subjects.”\textsuperscript{15}

Generally the Indians were well treated by the French. Thanks to the unremitting labor of devoted missionaries, many of these fierce “children of the forest” had become Catholics, living peacefully with their French neighbors. In the British colonies, on the other hand, almost anything seemed permitted as long as one was dealing only with Indians. For example, notorious laws of several New England states provided that a bounty be paid for each Indian scalp. Small wonder, therefore, that in disputed territories the Indians’ sympathy was generally with the Acadians and French and that they were almost constantly at war with the British.

The Acadians who had settled in the areas now known as Nova Scotia and New Brunswick were hardy pioneers who had industriously cleared forests, drained swamps, and gradually built up prosperous farms. In addition to farming, some of them engaged in fishing. Thanks to

\textsuperscript{14} Calnek and Savary, \textit{op. cit.}, \textit{Supplement}, p. 23.

their astonishing fertility, the original population grew from less than four hundred in 1671 to more than twenty-five hundred in 1713 and reached the twelve thousand mark in 1748, a few years before their brutal mass deportation from their beloved homeland.

Profoundly religious, the Acadian farmers lived notably pure lives. Even Cornwallis, the Governor of Nova Scotia, had to admit that they "were not given to any vice or debauchery." Another witness of their lives stated that "they were especially remarkable for the inviolate purity of their morals. I do not recall a single example of illegitimate birth among them even today," and "they were the most innocent and virtuous people whom I have ever known or of whom I have ever read an account in history." Their moral integrity, however, was not of a depressing puritanical character. On the contrary, the Acadians were happy, hospitable and gay people who loved social gatherings and gratefully partook of the simple joys offered by their rural life.

Negatively, the Acadians tended to be jealous and quarrelsome and were inclined towards gossip and occasionally to gross slander. This vice was rather common among rural populations in former times when idle conversation provided virtually the only form of recreation during the long winter months.

This introduction, of necessity somewhat lengthy, should provide a general idea of the character and political background of those people among whom the Spiritan missionaries made their appearance at a critical moment in their history.

2. Father Maillard, the Apostle of the Micmacs

Of all the eighteenth century priests who went forth from Holy Ghost Seminary to the missions on the North
American Continent, Father Peter Maillard must surely be considered the greatest. Friend and foe alike revered him as a holy priest, an outstanding scholar, and a zealous missionary, whose thirty years of labor among the Indians had produced a lasting effect upon the Mi'kmacs entrusted to his care. As C. W. Vernon expresses it: "He was a man of great ability, wide culture and infinite tact. The secret of his great success lay in the fact that he identified himself with those for whose salvation he was laboring, living with them, sharing their joys and enduring their hardships." 22

Father Peter Maillard was born around 1710. 23 After finishing his studies at the Spiritan Seminary of Paris in 1734, he sailed to Acadia in June of the following year. 25 Fifty days later, the vessel landed in Louisbourg amid the salutatory cannonade that customarily greeted every vessel.

His Linguistic Achievements

Soon after his arrival, Father Maillard began the strenuous study of the Micmac language through which he was to secure his lasting scholarly renown. He became such an expert in the language that, among the Indians themselves, a touching legend grew up about his marvelous knowledge of it. The charming and naive story which the Indians told a century later to Dr. Silas Rand, a Baptist missionary, deserves repeating. As Dr. Rand explained: "The first priest to come among them learned miraculously to speak their language... By means of an interpreter he informed the Indians what his object was. They readily assisted in the erection of a chapel, being paid for their labors. They did not refuse to receive Baptism. Not that they understood its import..., but they thought that it could do them no harm, and paboltijik, 'it was capital fun' for them. Having finished the chapel,

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1* Although he often signed his letters "Antoine S(imon)," his true name was Pierre, as he signed his last will. 24
22 C. W. Vernon, Cape Breton, Toronto, 1903, pp. 94 f.
24 Ibid., p. 439.
25 Maillard à M. de Montigny, 2 sept. 1735: C.F.D.I., 1, p. 57.
26 Ibid., p. 58.
THE TEN COMMANDMENTS IN MICMAC SCRIPT.
From the 1921 edition of the Micmac prayer book.
the priest shut himself up alone, and spent the time in prayer. On Sundays, and when the sick or the dying required his attention, he came out, attended to these duties, and then immediately shut himself up again. This course he continued all winter, until Easter. He then gave notice that if the people would assemble, he would preach to them. They did so, and to their astonishment, he spoke Micmac as well, and as fluently as any of them. And it is especially related of him, as proof of his purity as well as of his power, that he had learned no bad words... Knowing every other word, the moment he heard an individual use a word which he did not understand, he at once knew that it was a 'bad word' and could take the offender to task accordingly.”

Touching as this Micmac legend may be, it was only through arduous study and persistent efforts that Father Maillard arrived at his linguistic knowledge. As he says in one of his letters, “I do not dare to guess the number of years I have spent in this work — eight years, almost exclusively occupied in doing nothing but [learning the idioms], proved insufficient.” As early as 1738, he began to develop a hieroglyphic system of writing which his flock could easily understand, the use of which has perdured to this day. It was providential that he did so,

* Although Father Maillard says that he himself invented these hieroglyphics, the idea of using this pictorial script seems to have occurred first to Father Chrestien Leclercq, who employed it as early as 1677. Moreover, Father Gaulin, who wrote around 1720, states that, “following the footsteps of his predecessors, he gave [the Micmacs]... a kind of letters to fix their imagination, so that they can show one another the prayers, catechism and chants.” Nevertheless, Father Maillard is justly considered to be the creator of the Micmac script, since his manuscripts show how much he developed the original concept. They contain more than 5700 different “letters” or conceptual symbols.

27 Rand, A Short Statement of Facts Relating to... the Micmac Tribe... Halifax, 1850, p. 30.
28 “Lettre de M. Maillard sur les missions... micmaques,” Soirées Canadiennes, 1863, p. 296.
29 Le Loutre à ?, 1 octobre 1738: C.F.D.I., 1, p. 21.
30 Maillard, art. cit., p. 365.
Knaves or Knights?

for his linguistic work was destined to become the instrument through which the Catholic Faith was kept alive among his Indians during the many years that they were almost entirely deprived of priests.

As time went by, he wrote the first Micmac grammar, a dictionary, and religious handbooks which the Indians used whenever they were without a priest. They contained prayers, hymns, sermons, and the forms of baptism, marriage, and funerals.3*

When the British expelled the Catholic priests from Nova Scotia, and Protestants made strenuous efforts to attract the loyalties of the Micmacs, the Indians compared their new teachings with the content of Father Maillard's writings. Noticing that they differed from the battered manuscripts which were their "Bible," the Micmacs would have nothing to do with them. As Archbishop Joseph Plessis wrote in 1815: "Although they have been deprived of [resident] missionaries for about fifty years, they still retain the principles of the Catholic Faith — so much that not a single one of them has given up his religion."33 And as late as 1850, Dr. Silas Rand had to admit: "I do not know that a single convert has yet been made."34

In the absence of a priest, the chieftains would gather the people of their villages for Sunday services, read the "sacred text" and comment on the written sermon. All would then recite the prayers and sing the chants taught by Father Maillard. During the long winters, the book would be read in individual huts to wives and children and, "in this way the Micmac book has taken the place of a missionary for nearly a hundred and seventy years."35

3* His grammar was published in New York in 1864, while a manual of his prayers and sermons appeared in print in 1866 at Vienna, and again, financed by Father John M. Lenhart, O.M.Cap., in 1921 in Restigouche, Quebec. Some handwritten copies of the prayer books were still in circulation at that time.

33 David, art. cit., p. 50.
34 Rand, op. cit., p. 38.
35 See footnote 33.
Conflict with the Recollects

The ecclesiastical authorities were quick to appreciate the consummate prudence and outstanding talents of Father Maillard. Despite his youth, they made him Vicar General of Cape Breton in 1740. Later, in 1752, the Chevalier de Raymond, Governor of Louisbourg, proposed unsuccessfully that he be made Vicar Apostolic to strengthen his authority. Meanwhile his appointment as Vicar General brought him into conflict with the Recollects, members of an order laboring in the islands off Acadia. Hitherto, Father Maillard had worked without opposition from them. His new appointment, however, meant that the Recollects would fall under his ecclesiastical control — which was precisely what the Bishop of Quebec, Henri du Breil de Pontbriand, had in mind. The bishop was dissatisfied with these men and wanted someone at hand to keep them in check.

Desirous to retain their relative independence from episcopal control, the Recollects threatened to withdraw unless one of their number be made Vicar General. Moreover, they persuaded Governor Duquesnel of Louisbourg to request from the French Court the recall of Father Maillard as a disturber of the peace, whose departure would restore serenity to the colony. Fearful that the Recollects would succeed in their efforts to have Father Maillard removed from Acadia, the Bishop reluctantly consented to have two Vicars General on Cape Breton, Father Maillard and the Superior of the

36 *Arch. Archd. Qu., R. Ch. 110 and 113 ro.
37 Mémoire concernant les missionnaires des sauvages... janvier 1752: *Arch. Ministère de la Guerre, Marine, vol. 3393 (pp. 68 ff).
40 Le Président... de la Marine à l'Abbé de l'Isle Dieu, 7 mars 1743: *Arch. Col., C11B, vol. 77, 41(52).
41 Du même à M. l'Evêque de Québec, 13 févr. 1743 and 28 mars 1743: *Arch. Col., C11B, vol. 76-1, 6(110) and 8(118).
Recollects. They were to exercise their powers jointly and to submit to him personally any question on which they could not reach accord. Although this expedient removed the threat of Father Maillard's involuntary departure, ecclesiastical difficulties with the Recollects continued to plague the Bishop until their members' deportation from Cape Breton.

Father Maillard's work among the Indians, however, had far greater historical significance than his differences with the Recollects and his function as Vicar General, and must be considered in fuller detail.

**Chaplain of Braves on the War Path**

It would be entirely wrong to imagine that, upon accepting baptism and professing the Catholic Faith, these ferocious Indians had suddenly become so spiritualized as to need only a minimum of guidance to stay on the narrow path and to practise all the Christian virtues. Still savages, they had retained all their warlike instincts and barbaric practices. It required the utmost skill and leadership of their priests, to whom they were passionately attached, to keep them under a semblance of control and to wean them gradually away from their most cruel customs.

As Ludwig von Dieskau, a German officer in the French army wrote in 1755: "They drive us crazy... One needs the patience of an angel to get on with these devils, and yet one must always force himself to seem pleased with them." Father Maillard knew how to handle them, but it required all his skill and influence. As he told Colonel Hopson, the Governor of Louisbourg in 1748: "If only you knew, Sir,... what it means to have to lead such a flock, both in spiritual and temporal affairs, what oratorical skill is needed to make reason prevail, you would be inclined to say that their leaders must possess a special kind of magic power which is unknown

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43a Mgr de Pontbriand à M. Maillard, 4 sept. 1754: *Arch. Archd. Qu.* vol. I, fo. 51.
44 Knox I, p. 74.
to anyone else. I have been with the Savages for fourteen years now,... and I can assure you, Sir, that religion alone is capable of making them sometimes amenable and docile.”

In battle, the Indians continued to use their stealthy, lupine ways. Anyone not slaughtered in their attack, who became their prisoner, could be almost certain that scalping and death awaited him unless the priest or someone else were present to ransom the hapless victim from their hands. Unfortunately the constant state of war between France and England resulted in continuous appeals to the Indians to exercise their warlike instincts against either one side or the other. In these forays, the priests in charge of the Indians allied with the French were often compelled to accompany their flock on its bloody missions and to act as liaison men with the French commanders.

In such expeditions Father Maillard and the other priests made strenuous but sometimes unsuccessful efforts to repress the savagery of their recent converts. It would have been too much to expect that, before a battle, a few sermons on kindness and a “humanized” form of warfare would change this situation. The only hope lay in gradual change. For this reason, as Father Maillard says: “The priests have taken care to insert in their written rule of conduct [for the Indians] a chapter which from the beginning to the end shows the horror which they should have for such cruel behavior. They have seen to it that this entire chapter is learned by the children. The result is that one can see how gradually they are becoming more human and listen more willingly to the reproaches the missionary addresses to them.”

Aside from their allegiance to France, the Indians had an abundance of reasons to be hostile toward the English.

A memorandum, attributed to Father Maillard, lists some of their grievances:

1744. The treacherous kidnapping of a chieftain and his family and a broken promise to release his eight year old son after the chieftain’s death in exchange for British prisoners.

1744. The murder of eight women and children by a party of British soldiers who did not hesitate to rip open the womb of two expectant mothers to kill their unborn offspring.

1745. Another family kidnapped and another Indian imprisoned and killed despite a promise to release him in exchange for two British officers.

1745. Desecration of a Catholic Micmac cemetery on Cape Breton Island by Boston troops who smashed all crosses, dug up the bodies, and threw them into a fire.

1746. Two hundred Micmacs killed through “poisoned clothing” bought from British merchants.

1749. The treacherous murder of twenty-eight Indian men, women, and children by two English prisoners who had been released unharmed by the Micmacs.

Considering these continual grievances, their allegiance to France, and their naturally savage disposition, it is not surprising that the Micmacs were almost constantly on the war path. The task of supervising them all in the extensive territory of the Acadian peninsula and adjacent islands was too much for one man. Fortunately, Father Maillard soon got an assistant, a man who was destined to be praised by some and cursed by others for the role he was to play in the tragic plight of the wretched Acadians and the desperate efforts of France to reassert its rights in the New World. He was John Louis Le Loutre, later known as the Father of the Acadians.

Possibly the “poisoning” in question refers to the spreading of a contagious disease, such as small-pox, through infected clothing.  
3. John Le Loutre, the Father of the Acadians

First Labors

John Louis Le Loutre was born in 1709 in Morlaix, Brittany. After finishing his studies in 1737 at Holy Ghost Seminary, he departed for Acadia. A hearty welcome awaited him on his arrival at Louisbourg; his old comrade at the Spiritan institution, Peter Maillard, received him with open arms. Under his expert guidance, the missionary began the difficult study of the Micmac language, for Father Maillard had destined him for labors among his beloved Indians. Although at first Le Loutre felt "like St. Jerome when he was learning Hebrew," and almost despaired of ever succeeding, ten months later he knew the language well enough to undertake his apostolic labors. His confrere assigned him to the mission of Shubenakady, where Indians and Acadians had been without a priest for twelve years.  

His new post lay in territory then controlled by the British, who looked with disfavor upon any Catholic priest. Nevertheless, Le Loutre managed to gain their esteem and to maintain cordial relations with the civil authorities. He pledged to keep the Acadians loyal to France.

50 Father John Le Loutre had a brother who likewise was a priest in the Diocese of Tréguier. In 1740 this priest wanted to join him as a missionary in Acadia, but family affairs prevented him from executing his plan immediately. It may be noted here that some Le Loutre letters are signed "Francois."

49 In the Régistre de la paroisse de Saint-Mathieu de Morlaix (archives départementales des Côtes du Nord) September 27, 1709 is given as the date of his birth.


51 L'autobiographie de M. Le Loutre, N.F. 1931, p. 3.


53 Maillard à M. de Montigny, 24 oct. 1737: ibid., p. 61.

54 Le Loutre à ?, 1 oct. 1738: ibid., p. 22.


L'abbé Le Loutre.

FATHER JOHN LE LOUTRE
Courtesy Public Archives of Canada
the British government. Paul Mascarene, the Lieutenant-Governor, wrote, "I trust that you will keep your promise," and "the esteem I have conceived for you leaves no room to doubt that you will be disposed to help in maintaining peace, law and justice." Father Le Loutre resolutely set to work building churches and chapels throughout his mission and reviving the faith of his flock. Four years later, when assistance arrived in the person of Father Girard, he relinquished the care of the Acadians to his associate and devoted himself exclusively to the welfare of the Micmac Indians who roamed throughout the territory. As long as he was in charge of the Acadians living in British-controlled territory, Father Le Loutre scrupulously adhered to the pledge he had made to the Nova Scotia authorities with respect to the Acadians. As an Indian missionary, however, the priest was "not in any way subject to the English" government, for the Indians were free and independent tribes which had remained allied with France, even after the Treaty of Utrecht.

**Warfare and Capture**

In 1744 peace ended abruptly when hostilities flared up anew between the French and British. Duquesnel, the Governor of Louisbourg, launched two attacks against Annapolis. The Indians, who had never renounced their allegiance to France, took part in these expeditions.

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65 Noteworthy on the occasion of these attacks was the conduct of the Acadians. Pressured to aid the French commander, the Acadians replied with kind words but no effective aid and remained loyal to their conditional oath of allegiance to King George. Not even a new proclamation of the French commander invoking the death penalty against anyone refusing to take up arms against the British could induce them to break their oath.

57 Murdoch II, p. 10.
58 Ibid.
59 Ibid., p. 28.
61 L'autobiographie, N.F. 1931, p. 4.
63 Murdoch II, pp. 37 ff.
64 Mascarene to Secretary of War, 2 July, 1744; same to Shirley, 4 July, 1744: *N.S., A, vol. 26, pp. 109 and 113 (*B.M., add. 19071, 48 and 48 b).
Knaves or Knights?

English historians have seen in these attacks the beginning of the fateful events which finally resulted in the cruel mass deportation of all Acadians from Nova Scotia and have not hesitated to blame Le Loutre for them and for all their evil consequences.

In reality, however, despite diplomatic agreements or signed treaties, there was never any securely established peace in the country. Nor could there be peace until either the French or the British suffered a crucial defeat or until both sincerely desired to live together as peaceful neighbors. The charge against Le Loutre for opening the hostilities by leading his Indians in the attack against Annapolis is baseless, for the court-martial following the French withdrawal from Annapolis shows that it was not he but Father Maillard who accompanied the expedition of 1744.

In 1745, however, when Duquesnel undertook new military action against the British, he ordered Father Le Loutre to accompany his Micmacs on the warpath. This new action likewise failed and, turning the tables, the British managed to conquer Louisbourg. They immediately insisted upon seeing both Father Maillard and Father Le Loutre. Assured most positively that he had nothing to fear, Father Maillard presented himself and was promptly arrested and deported to Boston and thence

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70 It is strange that historians have continued to severely criticize Father Le Loutre for his alleged participation in this raid while hardly ever censuring Father Maillard for it. The latter freely admitted that he had accompanied the Micmacs, while the former's alleged presence with the Indians in this raid is not confirmed by the field reports of the time, but is supported only by the allegations of William Shirley, and Jonathan Belcher, dating from five and eleven years, respectively, after the raid.

65 Calnek, op. cit., p. 99; N.S. Arch. p. 399; Richard II, p. 64.
66 MM. Duchambon et Prévost au Ministre, 25 nov. 1744; Arch. Col., CI1B, vol. 26, no. 29(46); L'autobiographie, N.F. 1931, p. 6.
68 Shirley II, p. 482.
71 de Surlaville, op. cit., p. 250.
to France. Less confident than his confère, Le Loutre distrusted the British assurances and made his escape through the forests to Quebec, along with a band of Micmacs.

Now that Father Maillard was gone, the Quebec authorities considered Le Loutre the man in charge of the Indian Missions. After supplying the Micmacs with large stores of ammunition, the Governor confidentially told the priest that a French naval squadron was expected within a year to expel the British, hence it was important to keep the Indians in readiness so that they might aid the French operation by cutting British communication lines. Apparently the British commander of Louisbourg heard of this development and ordered the immediate arrest of Le Loutre, but the priest and his Indians were too deeply ensconced in the forest to be much troubled by this action.

In the Spring of 1746, messengers arrived from Quebec, announcing the impending arrival of the French fleet under the command of the Duke of Anville. For Le Loutre they brought specific instructions about the way his Indians were to help the fleet. Accompanied by a band of Micmacs, he set out for Chebucto, now Halifax. Soon a few French men-of-war and cargo schooners made their appearance. They managed to capture additional supplies from some British ships that had mistakenly ventured into the area. After building huts for the expected prisoners of war, the French settled down to wait for the main fleet. Meanwhile several hundred Canadian troops arrived in Beaubassin to take part in the operation and Le Loutre had to secure contact between the land and sea forces.

74 L’autobiographie, N.F. 1931, p. 8.
75 Murdoch II, p. 76.
Knaves or Knights?

Unfortunately, the main fleet was long delayed. When it finally appeared in September, it was in a state of complete disorganization; a contagious disease was rapidly killing its complement of men and its commander died before Le Loutre could reach him. Discouraged by the setback, the remnants of the once proud fleet set sail again for France. Leaving the care of the Micmacs to Father Maillard, who had returned from his exile on the flagship of the ill-fated fleet, Le Loutre followed them on a passing French vessel to plead the cause of his people.

Realizing the importance of the priest’s presence in Acadia, the French government urged him to return as soon as possible. After spending the allocation he had received for his personal needs by buying religious objects for his beloved Indians, the tireless missionary set sail again in May 1747 on board a vessel in a naval squadron which was convoying thirty-two merchantmen across the Atlantic. Four days later, the convoy met a British fleet of seventeen war ships and, after a furious battle which lasted several hours, some of the French ships were captured, including the one on which Father Le Loutre had embarked. The British fleet commander, Rear-Admiral Waven, who knew the priest from a previous expedition to Louisbourg, immediately inquired whether Le Loutre was on board. "I would have had a bad time," the priest wrote, "if anyone had recognized me."

To save him, the French commander passed him off as the chaplain of his forces. Le Loutre gave his name as Rosanvern and dumped into the sea any papers and books by which his true identity could have been established. It was not so easy to prevent his fellow captives from innocently betraying him. He spent a few anxious

77 Journal historique ... d’un officier ... sur le vaisseau Le Prince d’Orange: *ibid.*, pp. 75 ff.; Rogers, art. cit., C.H.R. 1930, pp. 114 ff.
78 L’autobiographie, N.F. 1931, pp. 10 ff.
80 L’autobiographie, N.F. 1931, p. 12.
82 Le Loutre à ?, 12 juillet 1747: *ibid.*, pp. 31 ff.
moments while visiting wounded men in the hospital when he heard himself addressed on all sides as "Father Le Loutre." Fortunately, no one seemed to have noticed the slip, but, because of this, he had to suspend further visits to the hospital. Finally, after spending three months in captivity at Fareham and Winchester, he obtained his release and returned to France.

Undaunted by the experience, he embarked again in 1748, to meet the same fate once more. This time he escaped with only one month in jail.84

In Acadia, meanwhile, Father Maillard had accompanied his Micmacs on their military raids, the most important of which was the battle of Grand Pré (1747).85 Under the cover of a blinding snow storm, the French and Indians surprised the New England troops in their night shirts. After losing some seventy men in their stubborn resistance, the British capitulated.86

The victory, however, had no further military consequences. Soon after, in 1748, diplomats concluded a peace treaty at Aix-la-Chapelle (Aachen), stating that England and France were at peace and restoring Louisbourg to the French.87 With the safety of the seas finally secured, Father Le Loutre managed to reach Acadia to resume his work among the Micmacs.

He soon noticed that the pious phrases of the diplomats had not relieved the state of tension which existed in the country. The situation was even worse than before. The new British Governor, Edward Cornwallis, began to build a town called Halifax at what used to be Chebucto, to serve as a center of English colonization. Disturbed by this invasion of their free hunting grounds, the Micmacs remonstrated with the governor by sending him the following letter:88

"Sir: the place where thou art,... the place where thou

84 L'autobiographie, N.F. 1931, p. 12.
85 See reference of footnote 76, p. 62.
87 Murdoch II, p. 118.
88 Micmac text of declaration in C.F.D.I., 1, pp. 17 f.
makest a fortification..., this place belongeth to me. I am come from this soil as the grass, as a native I was born here from father to son.

This place is my land, I swear. It is God who has given it to me to be my country forever...

The works which thou art constructing at Chibucto cannot fail to give me much matter for reflection... I cannot make any alliance or peace with thee. Show me where I, a native of this place, could retire. Thou driveth me away, thou! Show me then where thou wilt that I seek refuge.

Thou hast seized nearly the whole land, so that nothing but Chebucto remains as my sole support..., and thou wilt chase me even thence. This shows that thou thyself do not want me to cease warring against thee or ever enter into alliance with thee...

Even the grovelling worm knows to defend itself when it feels attacked. Surely, I, native, am worth more than a vile worm and I will know even better how to defend myself... I am coming to see thee without delay. Yea surely, I shall see thee soon and I hope that what I shall hear from thee will comfort me.”

Soon after receiving this letter (and by way of reply to the Indian raids) Cornwallis offered a bounty of ten guineas, later raised to fifty pounds, for each male Indian scalp. He ordered the Acadians to swear unconditional allegiance to the British flag, including the obligation of military service against their fellow Frenchman and the Indians. Failing in this, they would be deprived of all their possessions and deported from the country.

Father Le Loutre clearly saw the religious consequences if the Acadians chose to stay. At that time the prevailing opinion among the British was still that to be a loyal subject of the crown one had to be a Protestant.

91 Declaration of Cornwallis to Acadians, 14 July 1749: N.S. Arch., pp. 165 ff.
Of course, Le Loutre may not have had a chance to read the declaration of William Shirley, Governor of Massachusetts, proposing "to remove the Romish priests" from Nova Scotia, to substitute Protestant ministers for them, and to favor those inhabitants who became Protestant. Nevertheless, the general trend of the British policy was sufficiently clear to him to realize that the Acadians were threatened with, not only the loss of their nationality, but of their Catholic faith as well. As the shepherd and leader of a flock threatened with death, expulsion, or forced apostasy, the priest could not find it in his heart to stand idly by. He resolved to defend both Indians and Acadians against these cruel and unjust measures.

He began by arranging the resettlement of Acadian families on French-held territories and islands, while he himself withdrew with his braves deep into the Bay of Fundy. The entire winter of 1749 was spent in baptizing new converts and in instructing his entire Indian flock in the rudiments of the faith. At the same time he directed the Micmacs to patrol the peninsula and to intercept all British messengers. Neither nature nor grace gave the intrepid priest and patriot any inclination to submit meekly to wholesale slaughter and cruel injustice.

Although orders had gone out for his arrest as "the Author and Adviser of all the disturbances the Indians had made in the Province," Le Loutre did his best to prevent any harm from befalling the prisoners taken by the Indians. As he himself relates and other documents confirm, when the Micmacs brought in their captives, he tried to be on the spot to purchase their lives: 500 livres for an officer, and 100 livres for an enlisted man.

92 Shirley I, p. 337.
93 Richard II, p. 449.
95 L’autobiographie, N.F. 1931, p. 17.
96 See reference of footnote 90, p. 15.
97 L’autobiographie, N.F. 1931, pp. 15 ff.

43
Knaves or Knights?

Although the enraged Governor put a price on his head, the priest reports that in eighteen months he spent as much as twenty-five thousand livres redeeming prisoners from a cruel death and quartering them in relative comfort among Acadian families.*

Misfortune, however, continued to plague the French. In 1750, Beaubassin fell into British hands after it had been set afire by the withdrawing Indians. Fort Lawrence rose on its ruins. Meanwhile Father Le Loutre had withdrawn across the Misseguash River to the plateau of Beauséjour. He foresaw a new, invincible fortress arising there, the bastion of a new Acadia, where the unhappy pawns in the struggle between France and England would be able to live in peace and security. Le Loutre envisaged the fortress surrounded by happy villages and farms of fertile land reclaimed from the sea, with a church rivalling that of Quebec in beauty. The execution of the plans had begun by the summer of 1750.

In the fall of the same year an incident took place which Father Le Loutre’s detractors have exploited to the utmost in their efforts to destroy the priest’s reputation; namely, the murder of “Captain” Edward How.

The Murder of “Captain” Edward How

Undoubtedly, this deed is the most serious of all the crimes attributed to Father Le Loutre. It is said that he instigated the treacherous murder of “Captain” How near Fort Beauséjour, on October 15, 1750. Let us consider the incident as it was reported by Chevalier James

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* The British subsequently reimbursed him for these expenses which had caused him to contract large debts.  
** Although often called a captain or major, How held no official rank in the English army. He was a trader who enjoyed the confidence of Cornwallis, Governor of Nova Scotia, and was entrusted with all kinds of official and unofficial missions.  
100 L’autobiographie, N.F. 1931, p. 16.  
Johnstone, a Scotchman serving with the French in Acadia. This document, dating from 1758 or later, reads:

"It was both wrong and unjust that the English should accuse the French of having had a hand in the horrors committed daily by Le Loutre and his Indians. What is not a wicked priest capable of doing? He clothed in an officer's regiments an Indian named Cope... and laying an ambuscade of Indians near to the Fort, he sent Cope to it, waving a white handkerchief in his hands... No sooner [Captain How] appeared than the Indians in ambush fired at him and killed him. All the French had the greatest horror and indignation at Loutre's barbarous actions... It is needless to explain further Abbé Loutre's execrable crimes. Cruelty and inhumanity has always been sacerdotal from all ages... It would have been more conformable to equity and justice if the English had endeavored to catch Abbé Loutre and had hung him as the sole author and actor of these abominations."

This report would not leave the slightest doubt about Father Le Loutre's guilt if it were reliable. Its candid confession, however, that murder is exactly what one can expect from a priest, does not enhance its objective status. It disagrees, moreover, with the reliable diary of Captain la Vallière,104 with the letters of Prévost and of Father Le Loutre himself,105 as well as with the careful investigation of the whole affair by Father Maillard.106 Contrary to Johnstone himself, all these people were present in Acadia at the time of the murder. Nevertheless, it was largely Johnstone's report (which in many other respects also shows itself to be unreliable)107 that served to precipitate Le Loutre's accusation of murder.

That so many were willing to accept Johnstone's version can be explained only in the light of the existing

103 A short account of what passed at Cape Breton... by a French Officer: N.S. Arch., pp. 195 f.
105 David, art. cit., pp. 461 ff.
106 Maillard, art. cit. (footnote 28), Soirées canadiennes, 1863, pp. 399 f.
Protestant mentality. Another example may appropriately serve to illustrate the kind of anti-Catholic prejudice which has long since become a thing of the past. In 1774, the American Colonials, in revolt, met in Philadelphia to draw up their list of grievances against England. Speaking about Canada, where Great Britain had promised to respect the Catholic Faith, they said: "We cannot suppress our astonishment that a British Parliament, should ever consent to establish in that country, a religion that has deluged your island in blood, and dispersed impiety, bigotry, persecution, murder, and rebellion through every part of the world." 108

Johnstone's report of the murder is a highly fictitious story whose innuendos and excesses can be traced to earlier sources. The pattern originated with a report by Governor Cornwallis who, after calling Father Le Loutre a "villain," mentioned that "Captain" How had been treacherously murdered at the end of a truce conference, but did not attribute the deed to Le Loutre. 109 A few years later, William Cotterell, the acting Provincial Secretary of Nova Scotia, had the "villain," Le Loutre, "cause that horrible treachery to be perpetrated." 110 More details were added by Louis de Courville who arrived on the scene in 1754, four years after the murder, and additional embellishments flowed from the fertile pen of Chevalier Johnstone. 111

Strangely enough, little or no attention was paid to the explanation of the murder offered by Father Maillard, the Apostle of the Micmacs. Yet his report was the only one based upon a personal investigation among the Indians who had perpetrated the crime. 10*

According to Father Maillard, the Indians identified "Captain" How as the Englishman who, eleven years before, had grievously insulted them with the following

10* It solves also many of the conflicting aspects, recorded in other contemporary documents, which have been omitted here.
111 (Louis de Courville), Mémoire du Canada: Arch. Qu. 1924-25, p. 103; Murdoch II, pp. 214 f.
blasphemous address: "Hail Micmacs, servants of Mary! A great lady, indeed, she is before God for you. Would you ever be able to steer your canoes securely without her, especially when you are drunk, as usual? Your choice of Mary as your protectress has been very wise. The good lady liked wine and could so little do without it that one day she obliged her Son to perform, almost in spite of Himself, a miracle, so as not to be without it." 

Unbelievable and outrageous as such a speech may sound to modern ears accustomed to more tolerant religious attitudes, it is not out of keeping with the spirit of the past. Its author barely escaped being killed on the spot, and some Indians never gave up looking for him. They may have been motivated also by the fact that, when the braves were absent from their wigwams, How repeatedly violated their squaws. They identified their insulter three years later as "Captain" How, but on that occasion he was saved through the kindness of Petitpas, a Micmac chieftain who was a great friend of Father Maillard. They got their chance however, in 1750, when How wanted to negotiate with the Micmacs on behalf of the English. Dressing himself in the military garb of a Frenchman, the Indian Etienne le Bâtard — not Cope — told his companions: "I look more like an officer than you do and I speak better French. You, fellows, hide behind that dike, and only those dressed like Frenchmen come and walk behind me." He then advanced under a white flag toward "Captain" How and shot him when

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112 Maillard, art. cit., p. 399.
113 B.R.H. 1923, pp. 344 f.
114 Maillard, art. cit., p. 402.
115 David, art. cit., p. 444.
116 Maillard, art. cit., p. 405.
Knaves or Knights?

the Englishman saw through his disguise and turned to flee.\footnote{Considering that Father Maillard carefully investigated the whole affair and wrote only after having questioned the Indians "who had done it,"\footnote{Ibid., p. 407.} it is reasonable to assume that the report of this man, whom everyone including the English held in highest esteem, is more trustworthy than the chorus of Le Loutre's detractors. Even apart from Father Maillard's report, it is difficult to believe that this priest, who spent 25,000 livres in ransoming the lives of English prisoners from the Micmacs, would have resorted to cold-blooded murder, especially since Le Loutre had warned How that his life would be in danger if he were to go among the Indians again.\footnote{Ibid., p. 465.}

Most persuasive in the case for his innocence is the fact that Le Loutre was never brought to justice by the British for the alleged crime. They captured him in 1755 on the high seas and held him prisoner for eight years. Had they possessed any plausible proof of guilt, they would surely not have hesitated to bring it to bear against him when he had fallen helplessly into their hands.\footnote{Mémoire de l'Abbé de l'Isle Dieu à présenter à M. de Stanley (1761?): Arch. Qu. 1937-38, p. 175.}

It seems clear that they failed to do so, not out of mercy for their enemy, but because they had nothing to go on, except a letter written four years after the event by an acting Secretary of State comfortably closeted in his office behind the palisades of Halifax, and far away from the scene of events.

We have dwelled rather long on this deplorable incident because far too often Father Le Loutre has been accused of this murder, although the writers usually have added that convincing proof of his guilt could not be advanced. Fortunately, in more recent times reputable
Acadian and Indian Missions

historians, such as John B. Brebner, have recognized the baselessness of this accusation.

New Hopes

In 1751, Father Le Loutre made his Indians undertake a daring raid. A few months earlier, the British authorities had again arrested Father Girard, the pastor of Cobequit, now Truro, and imprisoned him in the fort of Piziquid (Windsor). In a lightning attack the Micmacs penetrated underneath the fort and triumphantly liberated the priest.

The following year, leaving his Indians and Acadians in the care of Father Manach, Le Loutre set out for Quebec to plead for his people. Advised to take up the matter in Paris, he once more crossed the Atlantic. The purpose of his voyage was twofold: to promote a speedy settlement of the boundary disputes between French and English lands in Acadia and Nova Scotia, and to obtain badly needed aid for the many refugees from British-held territory. Four months later, May 3, 1753, he was able to sail again to his beloved Acadia. He had obtained everything that Paris was able to give him: a promise to strengthen the fortifications of Beauséjour and a plentiful supply of capital for the construction of dikes to protect the low-lying lands against the notorious high tides of the Bay of Fundy, to buy supplies for the Acadians and presents for the Indians, to advance money for new farms, and to build a church comparable in

121 L’autobiographie, N.F. 1931, p. 19.
125 L’Abbé de l’Isle Dieu au Président ... de la Marine, 9 mai 1753: Arch. Qu. 1935-36, p. 399.
Knaves or Knights?

beauty to Quebec's.\textsuperscript{126}

As could be expected, there was great rejoicing when Father Le Loutre returned to Beauséjour and began to uncrate the treasures destined for the new church and to show the plans for the new edifice, as well as the new dikes.\textsuperscript{127} Hopes rose high among the unfortunate refugees. Surely France did not intend to abandon them to the tender mercies of Great Britain. A new Acadia was to arise around the mighty fortress of Beauséjour. They set enthusiastically to work building fortifications and constructing dikes. More and more families flocked to the area, abandoning their homesteads in Nova Scotia. Soon three hundred men were engaged in the work.

Everything, however, did not go as smoothly as expected. A furious storm arose and swept away the dikes after three months of hard labor. Undaunted, Le Loutre urged the hardy pioneers to begin again.\textsuperscript{128} Disturbed by the prospect of an impregnable fortress, and fearing that soon the entire Acadian population would seek refuge under its protecting walls, the British prepared an attack.\textsuperscript{129} Le Loutre urged greater speed in the construction of the fortifications. The money ran out, but the priest begged and borrowed wherever he could in order to advance the undertaking.\textsuperscript{130} To obtain the necessary food supplies he found himself forced to engage in trading pelts.\textsuperscript{131} Over and above all this, he continued to take care of his Indians, giving regular days of recollection several times a year and reminding them of their allegiance to France.

Some Acadians, too, murmured against the hardships they had to undergo in the new settlements and, "longing for the fleshpots of Egypt," thought about returning to

\textsuperscript{126} Du même au même, 18 avril 1753: Arch. Qu. 1935-36, pp. 395 ff.
\textsuperscript{127} L'autobiographie, N.F. 1931, pp. 24 f.
\textsuperscript{128} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 26.
\textsuperscript{129} Lords of Trade to Lawrence, 4 March, 1754: N.S. Arch., p. 207.
\textsuperscript{130} Mémoire de l'Abbé de l'Isle Dieu à Mgr le Garde des Sceaux, 7 mars 1755: Arch. Qu. 1937-38, pp. 147 ff.
\textsuperscript{131} L'autobiographie, N.F. 1931, p. 27.
Acadian and Indian Missions

the old homes. Le Loutre had to point out to them that by joining the cause of England they would find themselves threatened by the Indians, who continued to be allied with France, and that they would expose themselves to the danger of losing their faith.

This question, the loss of faith threatening any Acadian remaining under the British flag, continued to haunt him. He wondered whether he should refuse the sacraments to those who wanted to return to English-held lands and, not trusting his own judgment in the matter, he submitted the question to the Chaplain General of the Colonies, to the Bishop of Quebec, and to the Sorbonne. He worried about the oath of allegiance imposed upon anyone returning to or remaining in Nova Scotia. The answers he received lacked unanimity. In the end he wrote that he had never had recourse to this extreme measure.132

The British recognized that, even if Father Le Loutre did not act upon his own initiative in his efforts to rally the Acadians and Indians, he at least was the heart and soul of the resistance offered to their colonial expansion program. Enraged at his success, Le Loutre relates, the Governor raised the price on the priest's head to six thousand livres, but to no avail. Not a single hand, Acadian or Indian, could be induced to claim such blood-money. In desperation, the Governor then tried to buy the missionary's loyalty by offering him a hundred thousand livres and a promise of freedom of religion.13* Freedom of religion might have induced him to waver for a moment, but in view of past experiences, what value

13 Some similar attempt to buy the loyalty of Father Maillard may perhaps be seen in a letter of William Cotterell to Captain George Scott authorizing him, with the approval of Lieutenant-Governor Lawrence, to "get" Father Maillard and "to offer such temptations and encouragement as you know it will be in the Government's power to comply with."134
133 L'autobiographie, N.F. 1931, p. 28.
134 Cotterell to Captain George Scott, 12 April, 1754: N.S. Arch., p. 209.
Knaves or Knights?

could anyone attach to such assurances? As to his loyalty, it was not for sale.

The Judas of Acadia

At this juncture the English cause found an unexpected ally in the very heart of the fortress of Beauséjour — the French traitor Thomas Pichon, alias Tyrrell. He had arrived there in 1753, in search of employment in keeping with his alleged medical and legal education. When no one cared for his services, Father Le Loutre took pity on him and secured a minor position for him which would enable him at the same time to act as secretary to the priest in his heavy correspondence. This act of pity was a great mistake — one whose tragic consequences contributed to the final defeat of the French and the brutal deportation of the Acadians.

As is so often the case when open warfare degenerates into occasional skirmishes followed by periods of relative peace, the officers of the fortress of Beauséjour fraternized with their opposite numbers of Fort Lawrence in neutral territory, where they could console one another over the dullness of military life and alleviate their boredom. Here Pichon struck up a friendship with Captain Scott, the Commander of Fort Lawrence. Flattered by the attention shown to him which contrasted so strongly with the lack of appreciation in French quarters, Pichon readily listened to the captain’s glowing picture of the rewards awaiting a man of talents and loyalty in the royal domains of Great Britain.

When Scott made it clear that he himself was in a position to make the little secretary rich and honored, the temptation became too strong to be resisted. As

138 David, art. cit., N.F. 1928, pp. 133 f.
139 Pichon à Hinshelwood, 26 sept. 1755: C.F.D.I., 2, pp. 127 f. or Pichon, 110 ff.
140 Pichon, p. 111.
Pichon himself later wrote, "I surrendered completely to whatever he wanted of me." Copies of the correspondence exchanged between Le Loutre, Marquis Ange Duquesne, then Governor of Canada, the Court of Paris, the Acadians, and his fellow priests were forwarded to Captain Scott and later to his successor. Intelligence reports about the fortifications followed and even the complete plans of the fortress. In all, no less than fifty documents accumulated in the hands of the delighted British authorities through his treason.

141 Ibid.; cf. also footnote 139.
142 See reference of footnote 140 or C.F.D.I., 2, pp. 218 f.
143 Pichon, pp. 30 ff.
The first man to feel the effects of Pichon’s evil influence was Father Henry Daudin, a Spiritan who had accompanied Le Loutre to Acadia in 1753, and who had become pastor of Port-Royal (Annapolis). He kept up a lively correspondence with Le Loutre regarding the affairs of the Acadians whom the British endeavored to keep in Nova Scotia. At first he lived congenially with the British, but soon he began to sense Lieutenant-Governor Lawrence’s violent opposition. “I suspect,” the priest wrote, “that my mail has been intercepted.” Little did he know that copies of everything he wrote to Le Loutre were channelled to the hands of the English authorities. In the fall of 1754 Lawrence ordered his arrest, had him imprisoned in Halifax, and condemned to deportation, because his parishioners did not show enough eagerness to supply the garrison with firewood. The deportation, however, was temporarily rescinded when the priest’s flock promised to behave. Pichon was very much put out by this leniency, which he considered wholly undeserved.

In reality, the British did not trust everything they received from so tainted a source as Pichon. Besides, the only real complaint against Father Daudin was that his parishioners were slow in supplying firewood, and this offense hardly deserved to be punished by the deportation of the pastor. Moreover, it was considered positively dangerous to stir up too much resentment among the Acadians living in English-held territory at a time when renewed hostilities with the French could be expected at any moment.

Around the same time Father Le Loutre made certain

145 Pichon to Scott, 4 Oct., 1754: Pichon, p. 44; Murdoch II, p. 228.
peace proposals to the British on behalf of his Micmac Indians.\textsuperscript{148} They were scornfully rejected by Lawrence as “too insolent and absurd to be answered.”\textsuperscript{149} He had other plans in mind. An opportunity to execute them presented itself when the traitor Pichon forwarded a copy of a letter, allegedly from Marquis Ange Duquesne, the Governor of Canada, to Father Le Loutre.\textsuperscript{150} It told the priest to seek a pretext for having the Indians attack the British and thus prevent the further encirclement of the beleaguered French forces.

In passing on Pichon’s document to Lieutenant-Governor Lawrence, Captain Hussey added: “I have good reason to believe that the letter he calls Mr. Duquesne’s is of his own composing,”\textsuperscript{151} and then went on to explain why he thought that it was a fabrication. Lawrence, however, decided to forward the letter to Shirley, the Governor of New England, and to urge an immediate attack against the French.

By now, the British were very much disturbed by the French successes along the Ohio River. De Contrecoeur had just prevented them from building a fort at the confluence of the Monongahela and Allegheny rivers and had established Fort Duquesne at what is now Pittsburgh. Shortly after, George Washington was obliged to surrender Fort Necessity.\textsuperscript{152} All this caused great alarm in New England. Thus it is not surprising that Shirley raised an army of three thousand men, which, in the Spring of 1755, sailed from Boston to assault the fortress of Beauséjour.\textsuperscript{153}

\textsuperscript{148} Le Loutre to Lawrence, 27 Aug., 1754: N.S. Arch., pp. 215 ff.
\textsuperscript{149} Ibid., p. 218.
\textsuperscript{151} Captain Hussey to Commander in Chief, 12 Nov. 1754: Pichon, 60 or C.F.D.I., 2, p. 135.
\textsuperscript{152} Capitulation accordée ... (aux) troupes anglaises ... dans le Fort Nécessité ... 3 juillet 1754: Arch. Qu. 1922-23, pp. 342 ff.
\textsuperscript{153} L’autobiographie, N.F. 1931, p. 29.
The Fall of Beauséjour

If the English thought that the French stronghold was a mighty fortress, they must have been agreeably surprised. Its indolent commander, Chambon de Vergor, was busily engaged in pursuing the cynical advice given to him by Francis Bigot, the former intendent of Nova Francia: “Make good use of the position you have. Cut yourselves in for a good share of everything — you have the power — so that you will soon be able to join me in France and buy an estate near to mine.” The fortifications had not been completed, and the heavy guns, never properly installed, were rusting away (two of them exploded when the soldiers tried to fire them); his forces consisted of about one hundred and fifty ill-fed and undisciplined men who were physically and mentally wholly unprepared to do battle. To bolster his army, Vergor forced three hundred Acadian refugees to take up the defense of the fort. Threatened as they were with summary execution as rebels if Lawrence’s army captured the fort, these poor unfortunates demanded written proof that they had been pressed into service. As soon as a few shots had been fired, Vergor wanted to surrender. Father Le Loutre vainly exhorted the military to resistance; Pichon advised immediate surrender, and Vergor was all too willing to listen to the traitor in their midst. When surrender appeared inevitable, Le Loutre heard the confessions of the unfortunate Acadians; then, with a heavy heart, he watched the men set fire to the beautiful church which he had just finished erecting.

Three days after the siege began, June 16, 1755, the victorious Boston troops under Colonel Robert Monckton entered the fortress of Beauséjour and all resistance

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154 Lauvrière, op. cit., I, pp. 414 f.
156 Lauvrière, op. cit., I, p. 415.
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Acadian and Indian Missions

ceased. To Pichon’s chagrin, Father Le Loutre escaped with two Acadians through a secret exit fifteen minutes before the surrender.159 It would have been satisfying for the traitor to watch the priest fall into the hands of Monckton, for the Colonel intended “to have fun with him”160 — presumably after the lavish party which the French commander gave for his exulting conquerors.148 Trudging through three hundred leagues of dense forest, Le Loutre made his way to Quebec to seek help. By the middle of August he was again en route to France on behalf of the Acadians. Fate was once more against him, for the British controlled the seas and captured him. This time he was recognized, despite the fact that he gave his name as J. L. Desprez.161 In December 1755 he was jailed at Elisabeth Castle, Jersey,162 where he was destined to languish for eight years until the Treaty of Paris, in 1763, restored his freedom.

Pichon, after masquerading as a fellow victim of the Acadians, finally received a miserable reward for his wretched services: the King of England gave him a traitor’s pension of two hundred pounds sterling. He died in Jersey in 1781.163 A few years before his death he wrote: “Too late I see the fatal scope of my error. That moral honesty which I had made my idol was a mere shadow of the duties which I failed to perform.”164

4. The “Grand Dérangement”

The Capture and Deportation of Priests from Nova Scotia

It is not within the scope of the present work to relate in detail the poignant story of the cruel deportation

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144 Four years later Vergor’s continued negligence was to contribute to the fall of Quebec and the conquest of Canada by Great Britain.
146 L’autobiographie, N.F. 1931, p. 31; Murdoch II, p. 272.
147 L’autobiographie, p. 31; l’Abbé de l’Isle Dieu au Président... de la Marine, 10 oct. 1755: Arch. Qu. 1937-38, p. 163.
150 Ibid., p. 34.
known as the "Grand Dérangement." As is generally known, Lieutenant-Governor Lawrence took it upon himself to finally execute the periodic proposals to deport the entire Acadian population. That there was no question of a hasty decision taken in anger by a local governor is evidenced by the undeniable fact that this atrocious attempted genocide and manhunt went on for eight years, long after death had removed Lawrence from the scene.

The iniquitous plan was carried out in such a barbarous fashion that the unfortunate victims of it died by the thousands. Men, women, and children were rounded up and driven to the shores, while behind them rose the dense smoke of their ancient homesteads and peaceful villages, put to the torch by the New England soldiery. Packed into crowded boats "two or more to a tun," without adequate supplies, the survivors were scattered all along the inhospitable shores of the Atlantic coast, often to be decimated by disease or driven back to the

165 Winslow, p. 179.
sea by hostile authorities.

This tragic story is considered hereafter only in relation to the activities of those Spiritan priests into whose trust was placed the care of these unfortunates.

When Beauséjour fell into the hands of the New Englanders, there were only eight priests in the areas under British control: four in “British Acadia” (Nova Scotia) and four in the new Acadia around the fortress of Beauséjour. At least five of these were Spiritans. The non-Spiritans in Nova Scotia were Father Desenclaves, an old man who lived retired in an isolated corner, where he devoted his waning strength to twenty Acadian families, and Father Chauvreulx, pastor of Mines. The Spiritans were Father Henry Daudin, pastor of Annapolis, and Father Francis Le Maire, who fulfilled a similar function at Piziquid (Windsor) and Canard River.

In the new Acadia around Beauséjour were Father Le Loutre, Father Philip Vizien, chaplain of the military forces of the fortress, Father Francis Le Guerne, who cared for the Acadians scattered along the main rivers which emptied into the Bay of Chignecto, and Father John Manach, who, having completed his apprenticeship as a Micmac missionary under Father Maillard, now aided Le Loutre in his work among the Indians.

It is difficult to determine with certainty whether Father Manach was a Spiritan or not. The correspondence of the Abbot of Isle Dieu does not make it clear. Still, when the Holy See entrusted the Miquelon Islands to the Holy Ghost Fathers in 1765, Father Manach was the first man to be sent there, and he is recorded as a Spiritan in the list of the Ecclesiastical and Religious Superiors of the Holy Ghost Fathers.
In addition to these, there were several other Spiritan priests who will be considered later in connection with the conquest of the entire French possessions in the area.

On August 1, 1755, orders were issued for the arrest of the priests in Nova Scotia and three military detachments of fifty men each left in pursuit of them. Father Chauvreulx was arrested three days later. It took more trouble to find Father Le Maire, for he had gone into hiding to consume the sacred hosts in the various churches and chapels entrusted to his care. As soon as he had carried out this precaution, the frail priest presented himself to his captors. Father Daudin was surprised at the altar and arrested as soon as he had finished his Mass. Without allowing him to return to the rectory for clothing, soldiers conducted him to the prison of Fort Edward, Pisiquid.\textsuperscript{178} The priests' dwellings were searched and stripped of all documents.

Soon after, a strong military guard of one hundred and fifty men transported the three priests to Halifax. To the sound of drums, they were led to the public square, there to be exposed for three quarters of an hour to the ridicule and insults of the populace. After several weeks of detention, Lieutenant-Governor Lawrence had them deported to England, after which they made their way to France. Weak in mind and body, Father Le Maire\textsuperscript{174} withdrew from any further connection with the Spiritan missions and joined the clergy of Paris.\textsuperscript{16}\textsuperscript{*} Daudin went to his eternal reward in 1756 just when he was readying himself to cross the Atlantic again to resume his apostolic labors in Canada.\textsuperscript{177} Father Chau-

\textsuperscript{16} He had been unable to cope with the difficult situation facing him in Acadia.\textsuperscript{175} A year after his arrival in 1752, he had a nervous breakdown and began to act strangely, which made Lawrence refer to him as an "imbecile."\textsuperscript{174} Nursed back to health, he resumed his pastoral work at the Canard River, until his arrest in 1755.

\textsuperscript{178} Lettre de M. Daudin, Casgrain, Pèlerinage, pp. 102 ff.

\textsuperscript{174} L'Abbé de l'Isle Dieu, Table sommaire . . . Arch. Qu. 1937-38, p. 185.

\textsuperscript{175} Bourgeois, op. cit., p. 48; Casgrain, Sulpiciens . . ., pp. 409 f.

\textsuperscript{176} Murdoch II, p. 255.

\textsuperscript{177} Le Président . . . de la Marine à l'Abbé de l'Isle Dieu, 12 mars 1756: *Arch. Col., C11B, vol. 104-1, 44v(141); du même au même, 14 août 1756: ibid., vol. 104-2, 122(368).
vreulx,\textsuperscript{178} likewise, died soon after his return to France.\textsuperscript{17*}

Considering the priests in the Acadia around Fort Beauséjour, Father Le Loutre’s escape from the dire fate awaiting him at the hand of Monckton has already been recounted. Father Vizien, the military chaplain, suffered the same fate as the defeated French forces: namely, deportation to Louisbourg, on Cape Breton Island, the nearest French territory.\textsuperscript{181} From there he made his way to Quebec, where he was active during the siege of this city in 1759, as will be noted later. Father Manach withdrew with his Micmacs to Baie Verte, New Brunswick, provisionally out of reach of the New England forces.\textsuperscript{182}

\textit{The Chaplain of Hunted Men: Father Le Guerne}

Thus there remained only a single priest, Father Le Guerne, among the fifteen hundred to two thousand Acadians who had sought refuge under the illusory protection of the guns of Beauséjour. They had built new farms along the rivers opening into Chignecto Bay. Like their unfortunate fellow victims in the other parts of the country, they refused to believe that the conqueror would brutally expel them from the lands which they had reclaimed at the cost of so much back-breaking labor. Almost fanatically attached to their lands, many of them fell easy prey to the stratagem employed by Lieutenant-Colonel John Winslow to catch them without having to resort to scouring the country-side; he invited them to a meeting in Fort Cumberland — the new name of Fort

\textsuperscript{17*} Longfellow, in his immortal poem \textit{Evangeline}, has a priest, Father Felician, console the Acadian deportees of Grand-Pré before their embarkment. In reality, all priests on the Acadian peninsula had been arrested and sent away before the brutal deportation began.\textsuperscript{179} The only exception was Father Desenclaves, in the isolated Cape Sable,\textsuperscript{180} who did not stir from his retirement until his deportation to a New England jail in 1756.

\textsuperscript{179} Bourgeois, op. cit., p. 53.
\textsuperscript{180} N.C., p. 63.
\textsuperscript{181} L’Abbé de l’Isle Dieu au Président... de la Marine, 29 sept. 1755: Arch. Qu. 1937-38, p. 160.
\textsuperscript{182} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 161.
Knaves or Knights?

Beauséjour — to make arrangements about their farms.\(^{183}\)

Lulled into a false sense of security by the pardon which had been granted them in the capitulation of Beauséjour, they fell into the trap. Father Le Guerne was highly suspicious of the motive behind the invitation, but, as he says: “I could not very well oppose this step. [The Acadians now] regarded the English as their masters, they felt secure because of the terms of the capitulation, and considered themselves obliged to obey... I could not have counseled them to disobey... without being held responsible for all the evils of Acadia.”\(^{184}\)

Thus it came about that some four hundred Acadians presented themselves at Fort Cumberland. When they had assembled, Monckton read to them a statement from Lawrence, declaring them rebels, confiscating their possessions, and constituting them prisoners.\(^{185}\) “As soon as I saw them arrested in the fort,” Father Le Guerne continues,\(^{186}\) “I realized that it was impossible to meet the British halfway and that the best I could do was to save the remainder of my flock for our faith and for France. Through attractive promises, specious offers and even presents, which I did not dare to refuse at first, the British commander thought that he had gained me to his side.”\(^{18}\*

Intending to arrest Father Le Guerne, thus depriving the remaining Acadians of their counselor, the commander sent word to him to come for an interview. There had been too many instances of treachery, however, for the priest to be deceived by this ruse. “He did not know me very well,” he said. “I took care not to fall into the traps laid by him... When he repeated his invitation and urged me to put aside all apprehension and to visit the

\(^{18}\*\) Father Le Guerne had been introduced to Colonel Monckton by Pichon after the fall of Beauséjour.\(^{187}\)


\(^{184}\) Ibid., C.F.D.I., 2, p. 154.

\(^{185}\) N.C., p. 81.

\(^{186}\) Le Guerne’s letter, C.F.D.I., 2, p. 155.

\(^{187}\) Murdoch II, p. 274.
fort, I replied: ‘I remember the case of Father Maillard, who was shipped out of the country despite the positive assurance of a British governor’.” 188

Realizing that henceforth he would be a hunted man, the courageous priest withdrew into a wild region “always on the alert, nearly always in the woods,” 189 leaving his hiding place only when his ministry was needed by the wretched victims who had not yet been caught in the manhunt. To prevent their capture, he says, “I strongly and repeatedly advised those outside the fort not to enter it. I gave the same counsel to all the women who received frequent orders to prepare themselves for embarkment.” 190 The priest pleaded with them, emphasized the danger to which they would expose themselves by surrendering to the New Englanders, and indicated the way in which they could perhaps be united again with their husbands.

His pleadings with those who lived close to Beauséjour, however, were mostly in vain. “One hundred and forty of these unfortunate women,” he wrote, 191 “threw themselves in blind despair into the British vessels” to be deported to an unknown destination. He had more success with the people living along the rivers. “I had the consolation of seeing that hitherto not one of the women there was embarked, save four or five who were taken by surprise and forcibly removed.” 192

Meanwhile, a French lieutenant, Charles de Boishébert, stationed at St. John’s River, New Brunswick, heard about the fate of these poor people. 193 Rushing to the rescue with a score of soldiers and a hundred Indians, he surprised Colonel Freye and three hundred New England troops who were busily engaged in setting fire to the church and two hundred and fifty three houses

188 See footnote 186.
189 Le Guerne’s letter, C.F.D.I., p. 156.
190 Ibid.
191 Ibid.
192 Ibid.

63
Knaves or Knights?

In Peticodiac, one of Father Le Guerne’s parishes. In a furious battle, lasting three hours, the French and Indians killed or wounded many of the assailants and drove them back to their ships. Many others lost their lives through drowning in their hurry to get aboard. "This stroke," said Father Le Guerne, "scared the British out of their wits — more so than all the guns of Beauséjour." Fearing a repetition of this attack, the New Englanders hesitated to continue their incendiary task and man hunt so that the two hundred and fifty Acadian families still in the area "were able to collect part of their harvest and to withdraw with women and children into the woods." Determined not to leave the nearly one hundred women and children who were still living in the neighborhood of Fort Cumberland to their fate, Father Le Guerne now organized a rescue party. With the aid of a few boys and old men, he plotted an escape route through the swamps in the direction of Baie Verte, opposite Prince Edward Island. The distance was only about ten leagues, but it took the wretched victims a whole month to cover it. All the time the tireless priest stayed with these poor people to encourage them and to help them transport their scant belongings. From Baie Verte they made their way to Prince Edward Island, one of the two that was still in French hands. Another group of about five hundred followed a little later.

Meanwhile the New Englanders continued their ravages. Their success in catching Acadians was slowed and only a few women and boys fell into their hands. To make matters worse, eighty-six of Father Le Guerne’s parishioners managed to escape from Fort Cumberland during a stormy night by tunneling their way to freedom. They promptly rejoined their families in the

194 Winslow, pp. 100 f.; Richard III, p. 61.
196 Le Guerne, p. 40.
198 Le Guerne, pp. 40 f.
200 Winslow, p. 177; Richard III, p. 60.
Acadian and Indian Missions

woods. All that Lawrence's soldiers could do in retaliation was to set more fires. But this they did with a vengeance: November 2—7, 607 houses and barns plus one "Mass House" at Gasperau and Canard River;\(^{201}\) November 15, the church of Tintamar and one hundred houses; November 17, another thirty at Memramcook; November 20, one hundred houses at Weskok...\(^{202}\)

On both sides the skirmishes became more ferocious. The Indians fought, of course, in their traditional fashion and lifted the scalps of their enemies. Now the New England troops began to do the same. Father Le Guerne relates in one of his letters that "the commanding officer of the search party in Memramcook had orders to seize all Acadians in that place, to kill on the spot all those capable of bearing arms, and to scalp them...", leaving a message for Lieutenant de Boishébert couched in these terms: "You have started this, but we will continue with it until you withdraw with your Savages from this area. Among you the Savages are told that every Englishman they kill is one step up for them on the ladder leading to the Paradise. Let me add that for our men it will be two steps up for every Acadian destroyed'."\(^{203}\)

To make matters worse, the Acadian refugees became careless.\(^ {204}\) Living in make-shift huts in the woods, deprived of the most elementary comforts, they often thought about the cherished possessions which they had left behind in their homesteads. Sometimes the temptation to try to rescue their belongings was too strong to resist and frequently these lone wanderers were caught by roving bands of British soldiers. To prevent them from leading the enemy to their hide-outs, it became necessary, as soon as someone was caught, to change location, regardless of the severity of the winter weather. Father Le Guerne complained bitterly about the refugees' carelessness, but to no avail until Lieutenant Boishébert threatened them with heavy fines and deportation to

\(^{201}\) Winslow, p. 185.
\(^{203}\) Le Guerne's letter, C.F.D.I., 2, p. 158.
\(^{204}\) Ibid.
Quebec. Although such a deportation from the horrible scene of their suffering should have been regarded as a blessing in disguise, the Acadians continued to cling so tenaciously to the hope that they could ultimately return to their lands that the threat was remarkably effective.

During all this the New England troops continued to seek out Father Le Guerne, but without success. He continued to say Mass, the Acadians' only consolation, in hastily erected chapels, baptize the children, bless the graves, and, surprising as it may seem, to celebrate the marriages of those who, in spite of everything, continued to believe in a happy future. Soon, however, he saw himself forced to withdraw entirely from Memramcook and to go into hiding in the Cocagne region, farther away from Fort Cumberland, for the soldiery roamed more deeply now into the land. He felt greatly relieved when Father John La Brosse, S.J., came to his assistance from the St. John's River, and took over the pastoral care of the Peticodiac area.

Not unexpectedly, food began to grow scarce, for enemy patrols continued to raid the live stock. In addition, the refugees now had more than four hundred Indian warriors to feed from their meager rations. Unless they wanted to starve to death, flight became necessary. Before the Spring of 1756 could melt the ice on the swamps, Father Le Guerne again made his way to the coast opposite Prince Edward Island and prepared shelters for them. But so great was the attachment of these poor people to their beloved Acadia that many of them did not want to abandon their wretched huts. Only about sixty families listened to his urgings and left. Their places were quickly taken by a new group of refugees who had escaped deportation from Mines and Annapolis and had managed to make their way across the

206 Le Guerne, p. 44.
208 Le Guerne, p. 43.
Bay of Fundy, over the St. John River in New Brunswick, to Peticodiac.\(^{210}\)

Hunger soon forced the scattered refugees to appeal to the French commander of Ile St. Jean for supplies. "We lack absolutely everything," wrote Father Le Guerne in March 1756, "flour, bacon, peas, gun powder, grease, lead and bullets... It is three months now since we have had anything to drink"\(^{211}\) except water. But food was also in short supply on the French-held island, crowded as it was with other Acadian refugees. It was decided therefore to direct the remaining families to Miramichi, New Brunswick, where, it was hoped, they could at least secure some food through fishing. Thirty-five hundred Acadians made their way to this refuge. Their efforts to find food, however, proved fruitless.

Father Le Guerne, who had opposed their transfer to Miramichi, wrote that "it was a terrible place: it had never been cultivated, there was nothing to hunt, and very little fish."\(^{212}\) The following winter, he continued, "many of these poor people died from starvation and wretchedness. Those who escaped death, fell victim to a horrible contagious disease. Famine forced them to eat the leather of their boots, carrion and in some cases even animal excrements."\(^{213}\) Some of the survivors managed to make their way to Quebec, while others fled to the Restigouche River in Northern New Brunswick, and founded a new settlement there. A year later, however, the manhunt caught up with them even there, for the enemy was busy destroying the Acadians everywhere along the Gulf of Saint Lawrence.\(^{214}\)

Nearly all the refugees were gone now from Father Le Guerne's assigned territory. Only a few families remained who felt themselves secure in the upper regions of the Peticodiac River and did not want to move. Consequently, Father Le Guerne, in the summer of 1757, decided to go to Quebec on a personal appeal to the

\(^{210}\) Ibid.. pp. 159 f.
\(^{211}\) Ibid., p. 161.
\(^{212}\) Le Guerne, p. 29.
\(^{213}\) Ibid.
\(^{214}\) Lauvrière, op. cit., II, pp. 90 ff
Another French governor in behalf of the wretched victims of the cruel manhunt. He never saw Acadia again. Bishop de Pontbriand first planned to send him to Louisiana, the extreme south of his immense diocese, but in 1758 he appointed the valiant priest to a parish on the Ile d’Orleans, near Quebec, where a number of Acadian exiles had sought refuge. Father Le Guerne also figured prominently in the activities of Spiritan priests in the Quebec region, where he was destined to render another thirty years of service to the Church in Canada. His activities in this connection are discussed further in a later chapter.

**The Fall of Louisbourg. Surrender of Father Maillard.**

As soon as they had the situation in Nova Scotia sufficiently well in hand, the British decided to drive the French from their last stronghold, Louisbourg on Ile Royale or Cape Breton Island. The fall of this fort would determine at the same the fate of Ile Saint Jean, or Prince Edward Island, which was not fortified.

Father Maillard, the Vicar General and Apostle of the Micmacs, had his headquarters on Cape Breton where the Franciscan Recollects took care of the regular parishes. On Prince Edward Island the Spiritan, John Biscarat, was pastor of St. Peter’s in the northern part of the island and three other priests were stationed in Acadia, Father John Perronnel, had been pastor of this place and of St. Louis from 1752—55. A physical and mental wreck, he had to be sent back to France in 1755. Immediately after his arrival in La Rochelle he was confined to a hospital, where he died around 1758.

A letter of the Abbot of Isle Dieu, dated 1754, indicates that the other priests then stationed on the island were Father James Girard, Frégault, art. cit., R.H.A.P. 1953-54, p. 40.


Cf. pp. 140 ff.

L’Abbe de l’Isle Dieu à Mgr de Pontbriand, 1 avril 1753 and 31 mai 1753: Arch. Qu. 1935-36, pp. 382 and 408.

Du même au Président... de la Marine, 23 déc. 1755: Arch. Qu. 1937-38, p. 173.

the remaining parishes.

Father Maillard had returned to Cape Breton in 1749, after a voyage to Quebec. There he had built a chapel and residence in the Bras d’Or Lake (Chapel Island), whose care he entrusted to his Micmac servant, Louis Petitpas. After the fall of Beauséjour, he kept in constant touch with the governor of Louisbourg to aid him in the defense of the island against the expected invasion.

Shortly after the attack began, the governor appealed to Father Maillard, asking him to get in touch with Lieutenant de Boishébert. This officer had landed with Father Cassiet and Father Bernard Dosque. They may have been Spiritans, but conclusive evidence is lacking.

While the British fleet blockaded Louisbourg, two other priests sailed from France for that port. They were Fathers Guillaumot and Le Goff. At least the first of these, very likely both, were Spiritans. Guillaumot had been a fellow-student of Father Biscarat. They probably were aboard of one of the numerous vessels damaged or sunk by the British. A letter of Father Maillard indicates that Father Guillaumot’s water-soaked luggage reached Cape Breton, and a French Navy document shows that both priests returned safely to France in the summer of 1757 and were to re-embark again. For lack of further documentation it is futile to even speculate regarding the adventurous story hidden here.

How badly the priests on Cape Breton were in want of everything is revealed by the same letter of Father Maillard, in which he states that, having no shoes left, he has appropriated from the water-soaked luggage two pairs of shoes, as well as a pair of culottes, and given the rest of the clothing to Father Girard and Father Cassiet. The priest’s books (many Spiritan missionaries were scholarly inclined and owned fairly substantial libraries) were kept in a safe place until “peace returns” when he could make a second effort to reach his destination. The records available do not indicate that he ever returned to the North American continent.

222 L’Abbé de l’Isle Dieu, Table sommaire des missionnaires séculiers (1761?): Arch. Qu. 1937-38, p. 184.
226 See footnote 224.
some Canadian and Indian troops at Port Toulouse (St. Peter's) and his assistance would have been invaluable in preventing the British from landing in force. After delivering the governor's message in person, Father Maillard added that the Cross of St. Louis, a coveted distinction, was waiting for de Boishébert in Louisbourg. It was a reward which he deserved to receive for his courageous action in previous battles against a superior enemy. For some strange reason, de Boishébert seemed unwilling to act upon the appeal addressed to him by the governor.

Perceiving this reluctance, for which the officer has been severely blamed by historians, the priest told him in the presence of his staff: "Sir, you see how much trust the Governor has in you. Weak as your detachment here is, it will suddenly acquire triple strength: the Savages who have been waiting a long time will follow you, as well as the youth and even the married men of Port Toulouse. We think that you do not wish to have the cross awaiting you in Louisbourg in any other way than that in which David gained Michol." 20*

The officer's answer, Father Maillard related, was unprintable. For some obscure reason de Boishébert refused to come to the rescue of Louisbourg, no matter how much the Governor insisted, and how much his own men as well as the Micmacs and Acadians implored him to act. As Father Maillard reported, "The Indians told him: 'We will live on stray cattle. Give us rifles, powder and bullets and allow us to harrass the enemy.' But de Boishébert spoke to them so discouragingly that they decided to return to the mission, which is only at a distance of eight leagues." On the way back a group of thirty-two Indians, joined by twenty-five Acadians,

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20* According to 1 Kings 18:27, David gained the hand of Michol, the daughter of Saul, by slaying two hundred of the king's enemies.
231 See footnote 229.
232 Ibid., p. 182.
233 Ibid.
surprised and routed a careless British detachment of six hundred men. The English, who feared the Savages "worse than lightning" as Father Maillard said, thought that they were being attacked by a large force of Indians and fled in utter panic.  

Not before it was too late did de Boishébert make up his mind to go to the aid of the beleaguered fort. By then the British had surrounded it so strongly that he could offer no help whatsoever. After an heroic defense lasting forty days, the French troops surrendered the crumbling walls on July 26, 1758.  

Ile Royale again became Cape Breton Island. Two weeks later the British forces occupied the undefended island of Saint Jean and called it Prince Edward Island.

As could be expected, the conqueror decided to deport not only the French troops but also all Acadians living on the islands. Many of them had come there around 1750 when a voluntary mass exodus from Nova Scotia to French-held lands had been started under the sponsorship of the French government. Others had arrived only a year or two before as refugees from the manhunt instituted by Lieutenant-Governor Lawrence in 1755. The total number of these people has been estimated at about forty-six hundred on Prince Edward Island, and five thousand on Cape Breton Island. They had already suffered untold hardships and starvation, especially at Prince Edward Island, where the harvest had often been very bad. Now they faced deportation once again.

Just as they had done in the other Acadian lands, the conquerors systematically destroyed every French settlement and once more loaded the Acadians into crowded boats for their final deportation to France. Two or three of these leaky ships sank in the winter storms of December 1758, carrying seven hundred victims to their

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233 Ibid.
234 N.C., pp. 87 f.
Father Biscarat, who underwent deportation with his parishioners, died from exhaustion when his ship reached England. * Father Girard safely reached Brest after seeing three hundred of his parishioners perish when their ship sank in the dangerous waters of the Channel. 

Although thousands of Acadians were deported and hundreds disappeared without a trace, some managed to go into hiding in the islands or made their escape to Canada and the Miquelon Islands. A number of them fled to Miramichi, New Brunswick, where Father Manach, New Brunswick, where Father Maillard led his Micmac warriors to the same hiding place. The conditions of this refuge were appalling. As the priest wrote: “I see here only utter wretchedness and want. The families gathered here are all starving. They are on the point of leaving this horrible place to isolate themselves in different spots where they hope to be able to live from fishing and hunting.”

In May 1759, when Quebec was in imminent danger

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21 Father Maillard had planned to retain the priests stationed on Prince Edward Island by making them withdraw to Miramichi or to Matagomich, a small harbor unknown to the British. But only Father Dosque managed to escape and make his way to Quebec. He died there in 1774.

22 There are two accounts of this sinking. According to Captain Piles' report, the priest preached for half an hour to the doomed Acadians, gave them absolution, and then saved himself by following the captain and crew into the life boat. Father Girard’s own account merely states that the crew saved themselves as well as the priest and four Acadians.


238 See footnote 222.


243 See footnote 239.


245 See footnote 240.
of attack, the rumor ran that Father Maillard was coming to the rescue with a large force of Indians. A Micmac related that "ye French priests have received advice from Quebec that place would be attacked by ye wood and water, and that ye abbé Maillard, ye priest, was to conduct all ye Indians of these parts very soon to Quebec."246 At that time, however, the priest had returned with his Indians to Chapel Island, there to await the arrival of British troops and surrender. When they failed to come, he made his last will and returned once more to Miramichi, undoubtedly to help Father Manach in his work among the refugees. Always a scholar, he continued, even in these dire conditions, to work on his manuscripts.247

In October of the same year he was back again on Chapel Island, in time to receive the ultimatum of Henry Schomberg, the British commander, who appeared with his ship off the island. In bad French, Schomberg took the "importunity" (sic) to invite him to surrender without resistance, announced the fall of Quebec, and promised in the name of the King of England that the inhabitants would continue "to enjoy all their goods, their freedom, possessions, as well as free exercise of their religion."248

Undoubtedly, it was the personal prestige and influence of Father Maillard which caused the conqueror to show unexpected leniency in this case. Living as they did in constant dread of the Indians, the British did not dare to deport the only man capable of exercising control over them. As early as 1754 and 1755, the traitor Pichon had already recommended that his masters secure the services of Father Maillard, whom even he held in high regard.249 For this reason Schomberg got instructions to make to the priest, on behalf of the British, the first peace offer that showed any sign of human decency toward the Acadians.

247 See footnote 244.
249 Pichon to Scott, 14 Oct., 1754: Pichon, p. 45; Pichon to Captain Hussey (?), 3 Jan., 1755, ibid., p. 80.
Father Maillard was clever enough to realize that, since the fall of Quebec, the fate of the French empire in North America was definitely sealed.\textsuperscript{250} Despite the protests of some Frenchmen and Indians, he persuaded the Acadians and Micmacs to accept the conditions.\textsuperscript{251} Although some French historians have criticized him for this act, the course he took appears to have been the only reasonable one. As he himself wrote: "The pitiable condition to which I see nearly all our French families reduced irresistibly forces me to listen to the conqueror's proposals. By listening to them, I serve my country better than do many of those vain babblers who in their heart are not at all as they pretend to appear by their use of big words such as constancy, loyalty and unshakeable attachment to our country... It is certain that under the circumstances obstinacy would be a very imprudent way of acting."\textsuperscript{252}

Lacking the most elementary supplies, uncertain of not being betrayed, and without hope of outside help in time, the priest saw no future in a continuation of the resistance against the enemy.

His courageous conduct resulted in the saving not only of his Indians but of two hundred and thirty-five Acadian families as well. In February of 1760, the priest with the Indians and Acadians signed a treaty of peace with the British.

\textbf{Father Manach Falls Into a Trap}

As early as 1755, Father Manach had been ordered arrested, but had constantly evaded his would-be captors.\textsuperscript{253} Working among the Indians on the coast of New Brunswick at Miramichi and Richibucto, Father Manach took care also of about seven hundred Acadian refugees living there in utter destitution.\textsuperscript{254} In November 1759, the British made him the same proposal of peace

\textsuperscript{251} (Louis de Courville?), Mémoire du Canada: Arch. Qu. 1924-25, pp. 145 f.
\textsuperscript{252} M. Maillard au Captaine Le Blanc, 27 nov. 1759: Can. Arch. 1905, vol. 2, App., p. 188.
\textsuperscript{253} Murdoch II, p. 290.
\textsuperscript{254} Richard III, p. 317.
they had offered to Father Maillard; that is, peaceful enjoyment of their possession and freedom of religion. Because the refugees were literally starving, the British commander, Colonel Joseph Frye, supplied them with some food. Meanwhile he wrote to Governor Lawrence that these Acadians would “in the Spring be ready... to be disposed of as Your Excellency shall see fit.”

Trusting that the conqueror would show toward him and his flock the same leniency they had revealed in their dealing with Father Maillard, the priest wrote to Lieutenant Bourdon in Restigouche on January 27, 1760 that, “being without food, powder or lead,” he was going “to Fort Beauséjour [Cumberland] to ratify the peace.” Less gullible, Bourdon sent a warning: “You have stupidly fallen into a trap.” Lieutenant de Boishébert was vitriolic and insulting in his reproaches: “I cannot imagine what made you take this step. Are you by any chance afraid of the enemy? I can hardly believe so, for you are always in a position where you can run away from any blows. The only reason I can see why you want the Acadians to recognize the British as their masters and to submit to them is either the independence which the people of the cloth always want to have or the desire to re-introduce the despotism which your predecessors have always enjoyed in Acadia. If now you want the Acadians to make a separate peace, the reason is that unlike formerly it is now in your own interest. If there is a war on and if the Acadians are wretched, remember that the priests are to blame for it.” The furious lieutenant ended this undeserved tirade by adding: “Don’t think, Father, that I am in any way prejudiced against you.”

255 Freye to Lawrence, 10 Dec., 1759: N.S. Arch., p. 311.
256 Ibid., p. 312.
258 Ibid.
The warning was too late, however, for Father Manach as well as many of his parishioners, had already signed the act of submission which they believed to be in agreement with the promises made by Colonel Freye. 262 Soon after, the priest began to wonder what the Colonel had in mind by stating that ”they would receive the best treatment that the constitutions of the Kingdom accord its subjects in such a case.” 263 Too late he realized that he had fallen into a cunning trap. 264 In March of the same year, Lawrence and his Council decided that deportation was the best treatment that could be accorded. Once more a large group of Acadians were shipped off to England as prisoners of war. Although Father Manach had first been authorized to remain in Nova Scotia as a missionary to the Micmacs, he also soon fell into disfavor and saw himself exiled from the colony. 265 The official reason for his deportation was his ”extrēam ill Beha- viour”: he ”publickly drank the Pretender’s [Charles Edward Stuart] health.” 266 Deported in the vessel Fowey, he spent a short time as a prisoner on board of the Royal Ann in Plymouth harbor. 267 Obtaining his release, he returned to France. 268

The Treacherous Capture and Deportation of Father Cocquart

In 1756, about four hundred Acadian families had found shelter at the St. John’s River, New Brunswick. 269 Some of them were deportees who had managed to return

261 Ibid., p. 194.
262 Murdoch II, p. 396; Articles de soumission des Acadiens, 6 févr. 1760: C.F.D.I., 1, p. 55.
264 See footnote 257.
266 Minutes of Council Meeting, 21 March, 1761: N.S. Arch.; p. 319.
267 Pownall to Wood, 6 July, 1761: *N.S., A, vol. 66, p. 79 (*CO-217: 37, 140); Mémoire de l'Abbé de l'Isle Dieu à présenter à M. de Stanley ... (1761?): Arch. Qu. 1937-38, p. 176.
268 Cf. pp. 100 f.
269 Lauvrière, op. cit., II, p. 83.
from their exile in South Carolina. Father Charles Germain, S.J., missionary to the Malecite Indians, assisted by Father William Cocquart, a Spiritan who had arrived in Acadia during the disastrous year of 1755, took care of their spiritual welfare. Lieutenant de Boishébert with his pathetically small force offered them a measure of protection.

Thinking that, in this remote region, they would be beyond the reach of Lawrence’s strong arm, the unfortunate refugees began to re-establish themselves by building new villages along the river. Two years later, however, Monckton with three hundred men suddenly swooped down upon the peaceful countryside, incinerated two of the villages which they had so laboriously built, killed their cattle, and captured thirty families. The others escaped to the safety of the woods.

271 N.C., pp. 102 ff.
In the middle of 1759 Father Cocquart was in Quebec, where he had undoubtedly accompanied a group of the Acadian refugees. When this city likewise fell into the hands of the British, both Father Cocquart and Father Germain, with two hundred Acadians, swore allegiance to England and obtained permission from Monckton to settle at the St. John’s River. Yet as soon as they presented themselves to Colonel Arbuthnot, the commander of Fort Frederic, on the St. John’s River, he ordered them arrested and imprisoned in the fort, cynically alleging that Monckton had undoubtedly meant another St. John’s River, somewhere else in Canada. On November 30, 1759, Lawrence and his Council decreed the deportation of the Acadians in the area along with the two priests to England as prisoners of war. The execution of this decision took place in the following year when Father Cocquart and three hundred Acadians were deported to prison camps in England. In 1761 the priest made his way to France in the company of a young Indian and became pastor of the many Acadians who had sought a refuge at Morlaix in Brittany.

5. After the Deportation

The “Apostasy” and Death of Father Maillard

As has been noted, Governor Lawrence wanted to retain Father Maillard in Nova Scotia in order to induce the Indians to “bury the hatchet.” Until his death, he was the only priest tolerated in the country. In 1760, followed by his faithful Micmac servant, Petitpas, Maillard took up residence in Halifax. The Governor had assigned him a pension of one hundred pounds sterling and allowed him the use of a building for religious serv-

274 Same minutes.
275 Trudel, art. cit., p. 9.
276 Le Président... de la Marine à l’Abbé de l’Isle Dieu, 28 mars 1761: *Arch.Col., Cl11B, vol. 113-1, 79(122); du même à M. Hocquart, 6 avril 1764: *ibid., vol. 120, 113(88).
277 See footnote 265.
Acadian and Indian Missions

ices.278 By that time a number of Catholics had already established themselves in the city. Their faith was exposed to danger not only because of the government's hostile attitude, but also because an apostate French priest, John Moreau, now a Protestant minister, had begun to proselytize them.279

From his Halifax residence, the Vicar General took care of all the Catholics scattered through the maritime provinces. He referred to them with some exaggeration as his "parish of North America."280 Unable to travel far from his residence, he appointed laymen to look after the religious instruction of the children, to preside at the Sunday gatherings of the faithful and to read them his apostolic letters, to administer Baptism, witness marriages, and conduct burial services.

At the same time he made strenuous efforts to pacify the scattered groups of Indians who had not yet made peace.281 Thanks to the Micmacs' limitless respect for their venerable patriarch, Father Maillard succeeded in making them accept the new state of political affairs. On June 25, 1761, in a solemn gathering, the Indian chief-tains gravely listened to the priest's delivery of a speech by Jonathan Belcher,282 President of the Council, and especially to his promise that "your religion will not be rooted out..., your patriarch will still feed and nourish you in this soil as his spiritual children."283 Chief Claude Atouash replied on behalf of the braves in flowery language which clearly revealed the motives suggested by Father Maillard in favor of the peace treaty. Then he flung a symbolic hatchet of war into an open grave saying: "I bury this hatchet as a dead body that is fit only to become rotten, looking upon it as unlawful and impossible for me to make use hereafter of this instru-

281 Murdoch II, p. 402.
283 Ibid., p. 41.
ment of my hostilities against you.” After much ceremonial dancing and singing around the grave, the solemnities came to an end with a toast to the health of His Majesty the King of England.

Worn out by his incessant labors, Father Maillard became ill in June 1762, while he was preparing to pacify another group of Indians. He died on August twelfth of the same year. Since he was the sole priest tolerated in Nova Scotia, he lacked the consolation of receiving the last sacraments. The high esteem in which he was held manifested itself at his funeral, which took place at St. Paul's Protestant Church. Jonathan Belcher, the President of the Council, and William Nesbitt, the speaker of the House, along with four other gentlemen, acted as pallbearers. The Anglican funeral office was performed by the Reverend Dr. Thomas Wood and the burial took place in the Protestant cemetery of the city.

Hoping to capitalize on this event, Dr. Wood wanted the Acadians and Indians to believe that he was the legitimate successor of their beloved priest. A former army surgeon, who had continued to practice medicine even after he had been sent out as a missionary by the London Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, he visited Father Maillard in his illness to give him medical prescriptions. In a letter to the society which sponsored him, Dr. Wood claimed that, on the day before his death, Father Maillard personally requested him to perform in French the visit to the sick according to the Anglican rite of the Book of Common Prayer in the presence of the Acadians and Indians.

Shortly before his death, the clergyman continued, the priest asked him to perform the funeral service

284 Ibid., pp. 52 f.
287 David, art. cit., p. 429.
289 Ibid.
Acadian and Indian Missions

According to the same rite, telling those present at his bedside that the Anglican rite was about the same as that of the Catholic Church. Next, we are to presume, Father Maillard would have authorized the French and Indians to address themselves in good conscience to Dr. Wood for their spiritual needs. Briefly put, the implication is that, in the face of death, the priest would have committed apostasy and exhorted his flock to do the same.

Even presumptively, Dr. Wood's assertions do not bear the stamp of probability. Unfortunate as it is, it happens from time to time that a priest apostatizes and even seeks to have his flock follow him into a Protestant denomination. While frequently such a person will return to the Mother Church at death's door, I know of no case in which the reverse has occurred.

Apart from Dr. Wood's testimony there is not the slightest evidence to corroborate history. The register of St. Paul's Church, to which Dr. Wood was attached as assistant of the Reverend Dr. Breynton, is significantly silent on the whole affair. Any minister would have hastened to inscribe the deathbed conversion of the famous and highly respected Apostle of the Micmacs in his records. But the name of Father Maillard does not occur in them. If we add this silence to the fact that the allegations of Dr. Wood are in flagrant contradiction to the holy life of the zealous priest and to his constant care to make his flock preserve its faith amidst their Protestant surroundings, we can only conclude that the Reverend Wood himself has concocted the whole story. Undoubtedly, as a practising physician and surgeon, he was called to the sick bed of Father Maillard, whose friendship he assiduously cultivated. But the transformation of this medical assistance into a deathbed apostasy finds no support in any independent record and

290 Note in the manuscripts of Père Pacifique, O.F.M.Cap.: "Il n'y a pas un mot dans les registres de l'église de Saint-Paul que j'ai pu examiner à loisir."
can hardly be admitted upon the unsupported testimony of Dr. Wood.23*

Dr. Wood’s testimony, moreover, is rendered even more suspect by the way in which he appropriated the deceased priest’s papers and unscrupulously used them in his attempt to be recognized by the Acadians and Indians as their apostle’s legitimate successor.294 To prevent his scanty belongings and his library from falling into the wrong hands, Father Maillard had taken the precaution of entrusting them to the Government of Nova Scotia in Halifax, to be disposed of in accordance with his last will and testament. Although this will24* was not executed until 1772, Dr. Wood could write in 1764, less than two years after the priest’s death, that “providentially” he had gotten hold of the deceased’s writings. Through strenuous study of these hieroglyphic notes he hoped to be able to learn the difficult Micmac language and add force to the claim that Father Maillard had made the Reverend Minister his successor.25*

23* On the other hand, there appears to be no direct evidence either for the oft-repeated assertion that Father Maillard replied to the minister’s offer of spiritual assistance by saying: “I have served God all my life and every day I have prepared myself for death by offering the holy sacrifice of the Mass.”292 This supposed answer seems to be an embellishment of Bishop Plessis’ statement that Father Maillard made the minister a “reply worthy of a Catholic priest.”293

24* In a detailed study of this affair Dr. Albert David concludes that the priest’s last will itself has undergone strange modifications which point to its falsification by interested parties.295

25* Dr. Wood, moreover, planned to publish a Micmac grammar, dictionary, and Bible. He sent the texts to London two years after he secured Father Maillard’s manuscripts, but the London society sponsoring him refused to support his plans.297


294 See footnote 288.


296 Minutes of the meeting of the Society..., 21 Dec., 1764: *N.S., A*, vol. 75, p. 50 (*Lamb. MSS* 1124-2, 301a). See also Dr. Wood’s letter quoted in footnote 288.

Undoubtedly, Dr. Wood, who was held in high regard by his followers, acted out of an earnest desire to promote the Anglican Church. Thinking that with Father Maillard’s death the Catholic religion would come to an end in Halifax, he zealously cultivated the sick priest’s friendship, hoping that, in this way, he might wean the Acadians and Indians away from their “superstition” of Popery and have them embrace “our pure religion.”

By imitating some Catholic practices he was able to have a few gullible Acadians offer their new-born babes for Baptism. Some Micmacs consented to listen to his recital of prayers composed by Father Maillard, although Dr. Wood had to confess that he himself did not understand what he was saying. Even this small success, however, did not last; neither Acadians nor Indians were long beguiled. The Micmacs made it clear that “they preferred a priest of the Church to which they were first converted.”

If Father Maillard had really invited the Indians to follow him into accepting the Anglican Church, the limitless veneration of the Micmacs for their saintly Patriarch would have induced them to follow his example. But as we have seen, though deprived of priests, they remained faithful Catholics. Their apostle’s grave received no monument after his splendid Protestant funeral. Yet a touching legend sprang up among the Indians: “Bushes bearing beautiful flowers sprang up over his grave,” to remind his beloved Micmacs of the great virtues and burning zeal of their Mosi Meial.

The Disappearance of Father Cocquart

Soon after Father William Cocquart’s return to

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300 David, art. cit., p. 434.
301 Rand, op. cit., p. 31.
France in 1761, the government began to make grandiose plans for the colonization of Guiana in South America. Glowing advertisements spoke about this wretched, disease-ridden country as a land flowing over with milk and honey and promised generous support to would-be colonists. From all over Europe thousands of eager adventurers flocked to ports of embarkation.

Twenty-four Acadian families living in Morlaix felt attracted by the publicity of the advantageous conditions and the offer of a vessel, to be especially chartered for them by the government. It was then that Father Cocquart decided to accompany his parishioners to their new promised land. In August 1764, the vessel *Le Postillon* conveyed them to Cayenne.

Despite a reported expenditure of thirty million livres on the venture, the affair ended in complete disaster. Although the government had taken the trouble to provide a band of musicians to entertain the colonists, it failed to make sufficient provisions for the sanitary and economic necessities of the new settlers. Soon tropical diseases and famine took a cruel toll of the unfortunate people. A large number of the approximately ten thousand settlers perished on Devil's Island and its environs. Father Cocquart was presumably lost along with most of his Acadians in this disastrous attempt to settle the land of Guiana.

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26* A search of the parochial records of Saint Mathieu (Morlaix), preserved in the provincial archives of Brittany, revealed that Father Cocquart's last entry dates from August 6, 1764, when he baptized the new-born daughter of an Acadian family. Naval records indicate that *Le Postillon* sailed in August 1764 for Guiana. Although the passenger list is missing from the files preserved in the national archives of Paris, the fact that the records make no mention of Father Cocquart after August 6, 1764, sufficiently indicates that he accompanied his unfortunate parishioners on their ill-fated journey, as he had planned. Strange as it may seem, the departure of this Acadian group and their pastor, as well as their disappearance, is survived by no evidence in the local records of Brittany.

303 Le Président... de la Marine à M. Hocquart, 6 avril 1764 and 18 juin 1764: *Arch. Col.*, C11B, vol. 120, 113(88) and 204(163).
304 Du même au même, 11 sept. 1764: *ibid.*, vol. 120, 298v(249).
305 See footnote 302.
306 See footnote 304.
Father Le Loutre and the Acadian Deportees

Little is known of Father Le Loutre’s years as an English prisoner. A memorandum of the Abbot of Isle Dieu reports that, after being captured by the Oxford, he was held in constant watch as a prisoner on board the Royal George in Plymouth harbor.307 His repeated request for information regarding the reasons for his arrest remained unanswered. Five years after his arrest and transfer to Elisabeth Castle, Jersey,308 no charges had yet been brought against him. Moreover, strange as it may seem, it appears that he had to provide his own maintenance.309 On the other hand, he was treated well: “He has a room to himself, with a proper guard attending him, and a Fire and a Candle at nights, and decently
subsisted by the Garrison Sutler." Moreover, the "King’s Pleasure" allowed him "One Shilling a Day" on the funds "for Sick and Hurt Seamen," but his jailers permitted him to correspond with no one except a London agent through whom he had to obtain the funds for his maintenance.

The Abbot of Isle Dieu mentions the strenuous but unsuccessful efforts that were made to obtain his release from captivity. It was only after eight years of confinement that, on August 30, 1763, the Treaty of Paris restored him to freedom. The long years of suffering had not in any way diminished Father Le Loutre’s zeal for the welfare of the Acadian refugees or deportees. About twenty-five hundred of them were scattered along the west coast of France, especially at St. Malo. No provisions had been made at that time to find any kind of permanent establishment for most of these victims of the Franco-British war. As soon as he was released, Father Le Loutre again became the leader of these people.

* Immediately after the priest’s release, the British government warned Governor Murray of Canada "to be on guard against the famous French missionary de [sic] Loutre... [It is] probable that he may attempt to return into Canada." Murray promptly assured London that "should Le Loutre venture anywhere within my reach,... I shall not fail to follow His Majesty’s directions" and prudently but firmly expel him from the country.

28 The figure of 2566 is given for the cursus of 1773.  
 31 Fox to Lords of Admiralty, 4 Aug. 1756: *Can. Arch. and *P.R.O., Admiralty 1, 412, no. 52.  
 32 See footnote 307; Le Président... de la Marine à M. Guillot, 23 févr. 1756: *Col. Arch. ClIB, vol. 104-1, 38(117); du même à l’Abbé de l’Isle Dieu, 6 août 1757: *ibid., vol. 106, 93(159); du même au même, 16 mai 1762: *ibid., vol. 115-1, 121(115); du même au même, 9 oct. 1762: *ibid., vol. 115-1 261(266).  
 36 Martin, op. cit., p. 105.  
 37 Ibid., p. 65.
The French government had begun to take steps to settle the Acadians permanently in various parts of France or in the colonies. A favorable opportunity arose to establish a number of them at Belle-Isle, a little island off the coast of Brittany, although very few felt inclined to accept the offer. At this juncture the government appealed to Father Le Loutre to re-assume charge of the Acadians and to overcome their reluctance. Soon after, the priest went to Morlaix, his birthplace, where nearly four hundred Acadians had found a refuge.

There he began by organizing a group consisting of people originating from the same place in Acadia, the Canard River, who, all more or less related to one another, would be able to see in their new location a kind of reconstituted little Acadia. By multiplying his efforts, Father Le Loutre managed to obtain the construction of dwellings for each family, a little live stock and the necessary implements to cultivate the new lands given to them. Soon about four hundred Acadians were happily settled on Belle-Isle and unanimously declared that "they had received from Father Le Loutre whatever satisfaction they could have expected in the services which he had been kind enough to extend to them." 

A few years later, many of these Acadians left Belle-Isle, because they were unsuccessful in their efforts to cultivate these lands.

Memoire pour l'établissement de 77 familles acadiennes à Belle-Isle-en-mer (undated): Sp. Arch., b. 95, d. A, ch. I; Le Président... de la Marine aux commissaires des douanes de Bretagne, 3 déc., 1763; à M. Panauron Tilly, same date; à l'Abbé Le Loutre, same date; à M. le Président, same date; à M. Hocquart, same date; à M. l'Evêque de Saint-Pol de Léon, same date; à M. l'Evêque de Vannes, same date; à M. le Duc d'Aiguillon, 11 févr. 1765; à M. Le Loutre, 26 août 1765; à M. de Lahante, same date; à M. de Clugny, same date; à MM. les commissaires d'état de Bretagne, same date; à M. de Vaudésir, same date: Arch. Col., C11B, vol. 117, 520 ff. (269 ff.), vol. 122, 36 f. (31 ff.), vol. 122, 277 ff. (199 ff.).


Lauvrière, op. cit., II, pp. 182 ff.


Reconnaissance des chefs de familles acadiennes... au profit de M. l'Abbé Le Loutre, 16 février 1767: Lanco, op. cit., p. 44.

Martin, op. cit., pp. 70 f.
This first attempt to settle the Acadians was followed by many others. With untiring energy, Father Le Loutre devoted himself to the task. Writing to Count de Warren, he was able to say: "I am still firmly resolved not to give up until I see this business settled. By making a nuisance of myself, I hope to succeed. I would be quite happy if I could save these poor families from their wretchedness and enable them to live on their own labor and industry without depending on a government hand-out..." 324 "I have made more than one hundred trips to Versailles. I have gone to Compiègne and to Fontainebleau. I have paid several visits to the Duke of Praslin. I have pressed him and urged him to the point of becoming troublesome." 325

Despite all his efforts to find suitable locations, many refugees could not forget their beloved Acadia, where they had possessed prosperous farms. 326 An irresistible desire to return continued to haunt them. Pichon, the traitor, managed to deal with them and, he claimed, persuaded a thousand of them to settle again in Nova Scotia. 327 Others felt attracted to try their luck in Louisiana. A number of Acadians deported to the States had managed to migrate there and Spain, which had acquired this colony, encouraged others to join them. 328 Even Father Le Loutre himself thought for a time of joining the exodus. 329

While engaged in a projected settlement of the remaining refugees in Poitou, the exhausted priest fell ill at Nantes. 330 He died September 30, 1772 and was buried the next day in the St. Leonard Church of Nantes. 331 His selfless zeal for the victims of the Acadian disaster provoked the admiration of all those with whom

324 Le Loutre à M. de Warren, 1 mars 1768: Lanco, op. cit., p. 27.
325 Du même au même, (juillet-août 1768?), ibid., p. 30.
326 Martin, op. cit., p. 90.
328 See footnote 325; Martin, op. cit., pp. 86 ff.
329 Le Loutre à Mgr de Baisnes (1771?), Martin, op. cit., p. 274.
330 Ibid., pp. 92 f.
he came into contact. The Chairman of the French Navy Board wrote about him that he "has neither goods nor income, because he has spent his entire personal patrimony of 30,000 livres for the welfare of his missions and in aiding the poor." 332 "His disinterestedness in what concerns him personally is such as is seldom seen." 333 Another agent concerned with the resettlement plans wrote: "Father Le Loutre has never wanted to accept anything from the government [of Brittany], not even to repay him for his personal expenses." 334 This admiration of the priest found its last expression in his burial certificate, which states, as the ancient phrase goes, that he "died in the odor of sanctity." 335

Knave or Knight?

Father Le Loutre's life and work deserves some summary evaluation here. As has been mentioned, the Spiritan missionaries in these troubled times have often been called, as a contemporary Englishman put it, "a sett of rascale priests." 336 Father Le Loutre's conduct especially has often been described as wholly unworthy of a priest. Thus we find, among his contemporaries, Mascarene blaming him for all the troubles of Nova Scotia, 337 Cornwallis calling him "a good for nothing scoundrel as ever lived," and John Knox speaking about "that monster of cruelty..., who has more sins to answer for than all the Acadians put together." 338 If we turn from these evaluations emanating from his official enemies in the heat of the conflict and inspect the priest's fate at the hand of historians, we find Thomas B. Akins blames him for his vanity, pride, jealousy, cowardice, and dis-

332 Le Président... de la Marine à M. l'Evêque d'Orléans, 26 août 1765: *Arch. Col., C11B, vol. 122, 278(200); Cf. du même à M. l'Archêvéque de Reims, 19 mai 1771: *ibid., vol. 139, 166(38).

333 Du même à M. le Garde des sceaux, 5 mai 1754: *ibid., vol. 100, 86(83).

334 See footnote 321, p. 165.

335 See footnote 331.


337 Murdoch II, p. 83.

338 Knox I, p. 147; N.S. Arch., p. 591.
obedience to his bishop.³³⁹ Beamish Murdoch accuses him of ambition, deception and worldliness, but at least is careful to add that this information is derived from sources that may not be wholly trustworthy.³⁴⁰

In our own time, most judgments about Le Loutre have become more moderate. Norman McLeod Rogers, for example, concedes that he has been condemned without "witnesses for the defense," but goes on to say that "an indictment so severe and so unanimous must rest on more substantial grounds than common rumour."³⁴¹

John Bartlet Brebner likewise recognizes that Le Loutre's basic motive was "unquestionably religious," but he still accuses him of fanaticism and terrorism against the unfortunate Acadians.³⁴² On the other hand, we also find a contemporary author, John C. Webster, who still is inclined to give credence to the accusation of Le Loutre's murder of Captain How,³⁴³ finds it necessary to repeat an eighteenth century story about the priest making the first incision around the head of a British prisoner before having him scalped alive,³⁴⁴ and who accuses him of breach of promise, of being an agent provocateur, of prostituting his sacred office, and desolating a peaceful countryside.³⁴⁵

On the other end of the scale, as has been mentioned, his burial certificate states that he "died in the odor of sanctity."³⁴⁶ Philip Bourgeois, further, called Father Le Loutre "a holy man" and "the missionary most devoted to the cause of justice whom Acadia ever possessed."³⁴⁷ Albert David, who made the most searching study of Father Le Loutre's life, does not hesitate to state that when he died he was "greatly renowned for his sanctity."³⁴⁸

³³⁹ N.S. Arch., pp. 178 ff.
³⁴⁰ Murdoch II, p. 271.
³⁴² Brebner, op. cit., pp. 120 ff., 133, 177 f.
³⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 28; cf. Knox I, p. 147.
³⁴⁵ Webster, op. cit., pp. 29 ff.
³⁴⁷ Bourgeois, op. cit., p. 45.
Consequently, in the light of this wide divergence of viewpoint regarding Father Le Loutre’s place in history, it seems appropriate to re-evaluate his activities in an effort to place certain controlling features in their proper perspective.

First of all, Le Loutre’s life should not be viewed as if he had lived in modern times in which there exists a more obvious distinction between religious and political matters. In his life-time the sixteenth century principle *cujus regio illius et religio*, “let the ruler’s religion be that of his subjects,” still continued to exercise considerable influence. For all practical purposes “English and Protestant” continued to be the alternative to “French and Catholic.”

While Americans especially would consider it out of place for a priest to play an active role in political matters this same view was not prevalent in former times in Europe and its colonies. Church and State worked closely together, if not always in perfect harmony. In France, for instance, we find Cardinals Richelieu, Mazarin, Fleury and Dubois occupying the highest political positions in the country.

Moreover, if the British governors complained that Father Le Loutre engaged in political activities, it should be kept in mind that their own role was not limited to “the things that are Caesar’s.” Le Loutre, on the other hand, did not simply meddle in politics, but acted by official instruction as an agent of the French Crown. His immediate superior was not the Bishop of Quebec, but rather the Abbot of Isle Dieu, Chaplain General of the Colonies, who was appointed by the French Government. It was through him that Father Le Loutre received instructions emanating from the French Court.

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349 For a French example of such intolerance see l’Abbé de l’Isle Dieu au Président... de la Marine, 19 juillet 1755: Arch. Qu. 1937-38, pp. 152 f.

350 Le Président... de la Marine à MM. Duquesnel et Bigot, 17 avril 1744: *Arch. Col., C11B, vol. 78-2, 6(307).*

351 Arch. Qu. 1935-36, pp. 275 ff.
In other words, he did not act upon his own initiative but executed the orders of his superiors. As Harvey expresses it, he was an active agent "in a national policy which had the highest sanction."352

It would be useless to object that the priest had an obligation in conscience not to aid and abet the policy of the French government on the ground that this policy was immoral, because it tended to despoil England of what was rightfully its own by virtue of the French concessions made in the Treaty of Utrecht. As has been shown, the Governors of Nova Scotia reneged on the dutiful execution of this treaty.353 Consequently, France likewise was not bound in conscience to honor all the concessions it had made and was still less bound to surrender its new Acadia in New Brunswick. Neither, therefore, was Father Le Loutre bound to honor all British claims.

If, next, we examine certain accusations addressed to the priest, it seems clear that it is ridiculous to blame him for forcing the British to deport the Acadians. Yet this accusation has been repeated even as recently as 1959 by Lawrence Henry Gipson,29* who states that, if the Acadians had refused to listen to "the exhortations to

29* In support of his view, Gipson355 quotes the statement made in 1766 by Bishop Briand of Quebec in a pastoral letter to Acadian refugees: "Would to God that you had never disregarded the wise and Christian instructions as to your submission to your superiors. Then we would now have the pleasure to visit you in your quiet and happy homes. You could now have priests among you and you would still enjoy the possession of all the temporal goods you had been blessed with during the many years, when you were living as true Christians under the rule of your conquerors."356 However, Bishop Briand’s severe censure is diametrically opposed to the posi-

352 Harvey, op. cit., p. 131.
353 Cf. pp. 24 f.
355 Gipson, op. cit., VI, p. 205.
desperate measures of Le Loutre and his pupil Daudin, misfortunes would never have been heaped upon them."\textsuperscript{354} One might ask what these desperate measures were which the unfortunate Acadians took upon the advice of Father Le Loutre. Perhaps their departure from Nova Scotia to French-held lands against the wishes of their conquerors? Or their refusal to take an oath committing them to military service against their fellow-Frenchmen, as Lawrence wanted?

Moreover, as we have pointed out,\textsuperscript{361} in 1720, long before Le Loutre became politically active, the Acadians' deportation had already been under consideration. Its execution had merely been delayed until such time as it would be possible for England to control Nova Scotia without the presence of the Acadian population. The French priests, and in particular Father Le Loutre, tried to prevent this forced deportation — or the danger of apostasy — by making the Acadians move to French-held territories. As Savary remarks, "this they had a right to do, and France, as a party to the treaty [of Utrecht], had a perfect right, not only to encourage, but also to assist the Acadians in removing."\textsuperscript{362}

tion of his predecessor, Bishop de Pontbriand.\textsuperscript{357} In reality, before the conquest of Canada, there was no reason for Catholics to have an optimistic view of their future. Severe penal laws continued to rule them in the British colonies alongside the Atlantic. In New York, for example, any priest was "deemed and accounted an incendiary" and subject to perpetual imprisonment.\textsuperscript{358} The very liberalism of Great Britain in sincerely pledging to respect the Catholic Faith in Canada in 1774 was one of the reasons why the other colonies revolted against England.\textsuperscript{359}

To see Bishop Briand's sweeping condemnation of the Acadians and their spiritual leaders in the proper perspective, one should keep in mind that after the conquest of Canada this prelate showed himself a great Anglophile. He did not even hesitate to order that the name of England's King — the Head of the Anglican Church! — be included in the canon of the Mass.\textsuperscript{360} At any rate, the bishop's view has found very few adherents among non-British historians of Acadia.

\textsuperscript{357} Cf. p. 96.


\textsuperscript{359} Cf. p. 46.

\textsuperscript{360} Gosselin IV, pp. 23 f.

\textsuperscript{361} Cf. p. 24.

\textsuperscript{362} Calnek and Savary, op. cit., Supplement, p. 31.
But, one may persist, Le Loutre was hardly scrupulous in choosing the means needed to reach his goal: he acted as an agent provocateur, threatened the Acadians with reprisals through his Indians if they did not move out of British-controlled territory, burned their farms and villages, and took other inflammatory steps.363

It is true that sometimes Acadian settlements went up in flames when the French forces had to withdraw, but this is common practice in time of war. Military necessity may demand that upon withdrawal nothing be left behind that may become immediately useful to the enemy in his efforts to establish a new stronghold. The case which is alleged to substantiate this accusation against Father Le Loutre refers to the burning of Beaubassin in 1750.364 This place365 was set afire by withdrawing Indian warriors, upon orders of the French military commanders.366 The only record where Le Loutre on his personal initiative ordered incendiary measures was in the case of the church he had finished at Beausejour, shortly before this fortress fell to Colonel Monckton.367 This particular fire can hardly be presented as an effort to intimidate the unfortunate Acadians by burning their farms and villages. Still less should it be regarded, as Gipson368 insinuates, as a willingness to assume responsibility for the entire desolation of the country.

As to threatening the Acadians with reprisals through his Indians, there is a great difference between threatening with reprisals and warning that reprisals threaten.

30* According to Albert David,366 who made a very searching study of the life and times of John Le Loutre, this priest was not even present at Beaubassin when the Indians burned it. The chaplain, accompanying the warriors, says David, was Father Germain, S.J. Unfortunately, here as well as elsewhere, the author does not always quote the documents upon which he bases his assertions.

363 Webster, op. cit., p. 29.
364 Harvey, op. cit., p. 137; Brebner, op. cit., p. 177; Gipson, op. cit., VI, p. 246; (Louis de Courville), mémoire du Canada: Arch. Qu. 1924-25, p. 100.
367 Ibid., pp. 29 f.
368 Gipson, op. cit., VI, p. 230.

94
Acadian and Indian Missions

By way of comparison, who might claim that warning someone about the danger of living in a city threatened with atomic destruction is tantamount to menacing him with nuclear explosives? By swearing unconditional allegiance to Britain, as the Governor of Nova Scotia demanded, any Acadian would automatically have become an enemy of the Indians who had sworn allegiance to the King of France. Consequently, he exposed himself to the danger of being treated as an enemy by the Indians. Thus Father Le Loutre could very correctly emphasize the reality of this danger.

On the other hand, it must be admitted that Father Le Loutre's influence on the Indians would certainly have enabled him to make them at least habitually live in peace with the British and with the Acadians if the latter had taken the unconditional oath of allegiance. The question, however, must be asked here whether the patriotic priest was obliged in conscience to do so. Or did conscience impose upon him just the opposite obligation?

The answer to this question depends on the justice of the French colonial claims and aspirations as opposed to the British dreams of empire. It is an issue so fraught with complications that even the best-trained moralist would be hard put to solve it satisfactorily. The author is not reluctant to declare he is incompetent to settle it. Suffice it to say that most Englishmen and Frenchmen undoubtedly would have resolved it in favor of their respective countries. In the case of Father Le Loutre, the reader should not overlook his conviction that the faith of his flock would be seriously exposed by their remaining under the control of Great Britain.

As to Father Le Loutre's status as agent provocateur, such an accusation assumes that no state of war in fact existed in the territory and that the priest led the Acadians to illegal and unjustifiable acts against the British forces. As has already been pointed out,369 the non-observance of the Treaty of Utrecht meant that the state of war between England and France actually continued to exist. On the other hand, Father Le Loutre did not.

369 Cf. p. 23.
exhort the Acadians to attack the British as long as they were in territory occupied by England. And who would see anything wrong in the resistance offered by the victims of Lawrence to their ruthless despoilers once they were in French-held lands?

The immediate civilian and ecclesiastical superiors of the priest unanimously declared themselves satisfied with the way in which he carried out his functions. True, the Bishop of Quebec, Henri de Pontbriand, at first did not wholly concur with the Abbot of Isle Dieu and the French Court regarding the affairs of Acadia. Nevertheless, in 1757, after the Acadian disaster, he did not hesitate to write that "now he saw how right the Acadians were in evacuating the peninsula and how wrong were those who remained there."370 With respect to Father Le Loutre, the prelate emphasized that he was "irreproachable in all respects, not only in the exercise of his priestly functions but also in the role which he played in the temporal government of the colony."371 Moreover, the bishop was "overjoyed" when he heard that the valiant priest was still alive, "greatly desired to see him return to his diocese," and wanted the King of France to secure his prompt release "regardless of the cost."372 Thus the bishop's testimony efficaciously refutes the oft-repeated accusation that Father Le Loutre was insubordinate to, and out of favor with, his ecclesiastical superiors.31*

Regarding the priest's alleged breach of promise to keep the Acadians from taking up arms against the British, this promise was kept as long as Le Loutre and

31* This accusation is derived from an alleged letter of the bishop preserved only in the form transmitted by the traitor Pichon.373 Its authenticity appears doubtful. This letter, as we have seen, disagrees with the explicit and certainly authentic statement of the bishop that the priest was "irreproachable in all respects."


371 Ibid., p. 412.

372 Ibid.

the Acadians were in territory controlled by England. Out of a total of thirteen thousand Acadians only a handful resorted to armed resistance in British territory before they began to be hunted down like beasts. As Savary expresses it, "for forty years they had, as a body, kept inviolate the qualified oath" by which they had sworn allegiance to England without the duty of taking arms against the French or Indians. Had there been a massive recourse to arms, the course of history would have been different, for the British forces would have been unable to hold Nova Scotia against the combined efforts of the Indians, the French, and the Acadians.

As for the Indians, apart from a few small groups, they had never sworn allegiance to the King of England, instead remaining loyal to France. With respect to them, therefore, Father Le Loutre could not even be accused of any breach of promise. He himself likewise owed no allegiance to England.

With Harvey, one could object, of course, that it was wrong for the priest who had gone to the Acadian missions to teach "Christian charity and exemplified self-sacrifice," to set the ignorant savage upon the English and to pay for their scalps. It would have been better, indeed, if England and France had kept the Indians entirely out of their struggle. But, we may ask, does the responsibility for the existence of such a deplorable practice lie with Father Le Loutre? As Harvey himself points out, the "New Englanders openly paid for Indian scalps at this time; and the British used Indians against the Americans in the War of Independence." Even during

374 Calnek and Savary, op. cit., p. 138.
376 Harvey, op. cit., p. 232.
378 See footnote 376.
World War II the use of native troops from colonial territories was a common practice, despite the fact that we are now supposed to live in more enlightened times. Although Father Le Loutre may be justly called the heart and soul of the French resistance, the decision to employ the bloody services of the “Hell-hounds of the Forest,” as General Broadhead \textsuperscript{379} called them, was not his.

Undoubtedly, the thought of seeing a priest sometimes distribute “scalp money” to the Indians after their raids, as Father Le Loutre had to do, is particularly revolting to us. Here, again, however, we may ask whether Father Le Loutre could have escaped from so doing. The Indians were entitled to a bounty for every enemy scalp by virtue of the promise made by the French commanders. In the absence of any French officers, there was no one who could be more logically entrusted with the distribution of this bounty than the priest who was with the Indians all the time.

I cannot imagine that he particularly relished this loathsome duty,\textsuperscript{33} but this is true of many of the services a priest may be called upon to render even in so-called civilized warfare. When a military chaplain exhorts soldiers before combat to be brave and praises them after for heroism beyond the call of duty, he is doing virtually the same as Father Le Loutre did: encouraging them to kill or wound fellow-men and lauding them for their outstanding performance of this gruesome task.

The only thing I personally find objectionable is that Father Le Loutre suggested putting the blame for any warlike incident committed by the French, upon the Indians. This policy meant that the British would be all the more inclined to root out these unfortunate aboriginals of the American continent.

Thus it would seem that little merit attaches to all the

\textsuperscript{33} It is to be noted that the document about the priest’s payment for scalps says that “he has been obliged to pay them 1800 livres”\textsuperscript{388} for eighteen scalps.

\textsuperscript{379} C.H.R. 1930, p. 24.

alleged grave offenses attributed to the priest. Instead of being the blood-thirsty, ambitious schemer depicted by some historians, he was a man who rescued prisoners from the Indians whenever he could. His sole ambition was to play to the best of his ability the part his superiors had assigned to him in the desperate struggle of the French to save Acadia. Refusing all personal rewards and having sacrificed his entire patrimony in the cause of the poor, he spent the last years of his life in untiring efforts to alleviate the sufferings inflicted by the "Grand Dérangement" so cruelly executed by the Acadians' ruthless predators.

Without seeking to confirm the reputation of sainthood attributed to Father Le Loutre, there seems no reason to disagree substantially with the opinion of the priest's bishop who declared that his conduct was "irreproachable in all respects" or with that of the Acadians whose "descendants have not ceased to hold his memory in respect."381