In Nova Scotia

Cajuns Lost Great Piece Of Land

By ALTON BROUSSARD

GRAND PRE, Nova Scotia—After completing an eight-day sightseeing tour of Nova Scotia, the heartland of my Cajun ancestors, I have arrived at two sad conclusions:

The Acadians lost a great piece of real estate when they chose exile instead of the English; and those Acadians who did escape deportation or who drifted back have been almost swallowed up by the Scots.

A guided and pre-arranged tour that the wife and I joined in New York was not intended to be a research trip or a strictly Acadian tour; however, we did travel through the center of what the Nova Scotian Board of Trade calls the Evangeline Country. Naturally, we expected to be overwhelmed by Acadians in this area.

But we weren't.

Population Problem?

It became quickly obvious to us that the Nova Scotian Acadians are not nearly as prolific as the Louisiana Acadians. In the quaint town of Digby, the dining room waitresses were university students, some of whom attended Acadia University in Wolfville (in the Land of Evangeline). We thought it reasonable to assume that there must be numerous Acadians attending Acadia University. Apparently we were wrong. Not one of the cooks we questioned were Acadians and not one could even name a classmate who was Acadian.

Mais jamais: A "French" Acadian

The first Acadian with whom I could conduct a bonfire conversation was a young Catholic priest who led community sing-songs at a summer resort. His last name was D'Entremont and, as he admitted, his people were Acadians and not one could even name a classmate who was Acadian.

Friendship Pays Off

It seems that some Acadians, including his forebears, became close friends of captains and other officers of English ships which stopped off at their New Breston village on routes to or from the American colonies and England. The Acadians would help to outfit the mariners and their naturally warm and docile natures won fast friendships between the politically-opposed people. Thus, when these trans-Atlantic ships were requisitioned to move the Acadian nation out of Acadia, the mariners dumped off their human cargoes among hospitable peoples except for the D'Entremonts, whom they returned surreptitiously to their native village.

At Grand Pre National Historic Park, which has become the focus and symbol of "de grand derangement," the great upheaval in Nova Scotia, we found that one of the guides, a young university coed named Dorothy Donelle, is Acadian. Her home is in Grande-Digue, New Brunswick. We photographed her because she was pretty; she was an Acadian, and we needed documentation that there are some Acadians in the Land of Evangeline.

Time Is Limited

The tour director, an un

GRAND PRE Historic Park exhumed and preserves symbols of a heart-tugging incident of major historical interest to Louisiana Acadians. At Grand Pre National Historic Park, which has become the focus and symbol of "de grand derangement," the great upheaval in Nova Scotia, we found that one of the guides, a young university coed named Dorothy Donelle, is Acadian. Her home is in Grande-Digue, New Brunswick. We photographed her because she was pretty; she was an Acadian, and we needed documentation that there are some Acadians in the Land of Evangeline.

The Habitation was established to accommodate a party of Samuel de Champlain's expedition at Port Royal in 1606. Unlike many expeditions, the winter of 1606-1607 was pleasantly spent in the Habitation. Game, fish and other food and wine was plentiful and the men whiled away the time by establishing "The Order of Good Cheer," the first social club in America. The Habitation's well, here being tested out by Mrs. Alton Broussard, still has water in it.