More on Beaubassin
Lafayette, Louisiana
January 12, 1963

Public Forum
Daily Advertiser

Dear Sir:

In answer to Mr. Dudley LeBlanc's letter which appeared in the Public Forum of January 11, 1963, please publish the enclosed copy of a letter written to him on November 26, 1962.

Yours very truly,
Signed T. J. Arceneaux

November 26, 1962
Lafayette, Louisiana

Dudley J. LeBlanc
Dear Sir:

This is in answer to your letter to November 19 relative to the roadside-marker dedicated in the Beaubassin community of Lafayette Parish, November 11, 1962.

I should like to call your attention to the fact that the marker is captioned “Beaubassin” and to quote directly from my address, it was “Dedicated to the pioneers of Louisiana’s Beaubassin — to pioneers who fought their cruel exile from the once beautiful Canadian community of Beaubassin. Finally ended their painful odyssey on the fertile, but yet undeveloped prairies of the Attakapas. In order to further emphasize this fact, twenty-seven young ladies, representing the pioneer Acadian families who settled in the area were included in our dedication program. Following an account of the establishment of old Beaubassin and the exile of the Acadians from that region, I concluded my address with the following statement: “May the Beaubassin marker which we are inaugurating today, together with the one in Bon Secour, Quebec, and the one on the site of the original Beaubassin in Nova Scotia, help keep alive the lofty traditions and the glorious heritage of that small band of brave Acadian farmers who, in the face of personal loss and the constant threat of death, fought on and received the thanks of their countrymen when they trace the prairies of the Attakapas into a land worth of its rightful designation as the “Eden of Louisiana.”

Yes, I am not the first person to claim Beaubassin as the home of Gabriel. The above opinion was pointed out that this Pierre also established a home in St. James in that year, but that in 1787, according to the official archives in St. James, he moved his farm to a well established ranch in the Attakapas. Therefore, it could be assumed that he must have

commuted, over the years, between St. James and the Attakapas, while in the process of establishing a new home for his family and thus he could have been the Arceneaux standing in the vicinity of the Evangeline Oak in St. Martinville when Emmeline Labiche and her party landed their boat there. The records in St. Martinville show that this Arceneaux died at his home in Beaubassin in 1793. In my application for the marker which was approved by the State Department of Commerce and Industry and by the History Department of Louisiana State University, the following statement was made relative to the above: “In order to prevent confusion, the first Arceneaux who migrated to Louisiana following the dispersal of the Acadians is referred to as “Louis Pierre” instead of as Pierre or Penaut (his nickname) as in the original documents. It is positive that the above is the only exiled Acadian by the name of Arceneaux who settled in the Attakapas District and, therefore, he is the ancestor of all persons by the name of Arceneaux in the region and the person referred to as “Louis” by Felix Voorhies, in his “Acadian Reminiscences.” Regardless of the fact that he is listed as Pierre or Penaut in all records, there is strong evidence from family tradition, that he also carried the name of “Louis”. The above is further substantiated by the fact that his eldest son, “Louis”, is referred to, in some of the records, as “Louis Jr.”

We are all aware of the fact that no one can prove that Emmeline Labiche ever lived and there is a statue of her next to the church in St. Martinville. There is even a plaque, placed near the Evangeline Oak by the State of Louisiana, to mark the spot where Emmeline Labiche and Louis Arceneaux met. The statue and the marker have been there for a long time and I have no knowledge that anyone has ever voiced an opinion that they should be removed! the marker at Beaubassin in addition to honoring the memory of the pioneer Acadian settlers, is also, in my opinion, helpful in preserving our local traditions that are kept alive by visitors — traditions that are keeping alive the story and the heritage of our Acadian ancestors.

Enclosed is a copy of a letter received from Mr. Andre Olivier, concerning the Beaubassin marker and the aboveoppelion that the last name was “Emmeline Labiche.” When the loyal girl sees her hero, then tells her that, wear on her love-light answer, “May the Beaubassin marker ever lived and still there be as an Acadian by the name of Arcaneaux standing in the vicinity of the Evangeline Oak by the State of Louisiana,” when Evangeline loses her reason for one year, and the person referred to as “Louis” by Felix Voorhies, in his “Acadian Reminiscences.”

In conclusion, I would like to call your attention to the fact that it has been pointed out that this Pierre also established a home in St. James in that year, but that in 1787, according to the official archives in St. James, he moved his farm to a well established ranch in the Attakapas. Therefore, it could be assumed that he must have

Yours very truly,
Signed T. J. Arceneaux