The Acadians appealed to Gov. Richard Phillips, who did what he could. The Acadians still had Phillips over a barrel. If they didn't sign, they couldn't fish. Phillips wrote to London:

As to the Acadians of Nova Scotia ... we are apprehensive they will never become good subjects to His Majesty. We are of opinion they ought to be removed as soon as the forces which we have proposed to send to you shall arrive in your Province. But ... you are not to attempt their removal without His Majesty's positive order ... you will do well in the meantime to continue the same prudent and cautious conduct towards them...

The English wanted the Acadians out, but weren't strong enough to force the issue — not yet.

The War of Austrian Succession, which ended in 1740, was fought over whether a fat lady named Maria Theresa would inherit the Hapsburg Empire in Europe. It had nothing to do with Acadie, except that the French jumped in on one side of the war and the British jumped in on the other. Whenever that happened, the Acadians seemed sure to get caught in the middle.

It came at a time when things in the Cajun homeland were settling down some, perhaps settling down too much. During the 1720s there had been two incidents that deepened the animosity between the Acadians and the English, but the next decade brought relative peace and prosperity. Then things began to fall apart.

On March 24, 1724, during an English attack against an Abenaki village on the coast of Maine, missionary priest Sebastian Kase was shot by the English at the door of his church, scalped, and his body mutilated. That did nothing for Acadian spirits. At about the same time, 50 Micmac Indians, friends of the French, surprised the English garrison at Annapolis Royal, killing two soldiers and seriously wounding a dozen more. That irked the English, who claimed the Acadians had instigated the Indian raid. The Brits burned many of the Acadians' homes and sent their priests away.

In the fall of 1726, Major Lawrence Armstrong became provincial administrator, and was determined to force the Acadians to take the oath of allegiance. Once again they refused to take it unless it contained a clause that they would not be forced to fight against the French. Armstrong agreed to insert the clause, and did — in the margin of the French translation, only. But he sent the English version, without the clause, to London.

The deportation of the Acadians from Grand Pre, from a painting by George Catrige, displayed in the Acadian Museum at the University of Moncton, New Brunswick.

The Acadian population increased so rapidly that the old farms could no longer hold them all. In 1722, Governor Phillips estimated the population at 800 families, double what it had been ten years earlier. A census in 1737 found 7,598 Acadians in Nova Scotia. And that presented a new problem.

In 1740, the year France and England went back to war, the acting governor wrote to London:

The Acadians still had Phillips over a barrel. If they didn't sign, they couldn't fish. Phillips wrote to London:

As to the Acadians of Nova Scotia ... we are apprehensive they will never become good subjects to His Majesty. We are of opinion they ought to be removed as soon as the forces which we have proposed to send to you shall arrive in your Province. But ... you are not to attempt their removal without His Majesty's positive order ... you will do well in the meantime to continue the same prudent and cautious conduct towards them...

The English wanted the Acadians out, but weren't strong enough to force the issue — not yet.

The War of Austrian Succession, which ended in 1740, was fought over whether a fat lady named Maria Theresa would inherit the Hapsburg Empire in Europe. It had nothing to do with Acadie, except that the French jumped in on one side of the war and the British jumped in on the other. Whenever that happened, the Acadians seemed sure to get caught in the middle.

It came at a time when things in the Cajun homeland were settling down some, perhaps settling down too much. During the 1720s there had been two incidents that deepened the animosity between the Acadians and the English, but the next decade brought relative peace and prosperity. Then things began to fall apart.

On March 24, 1724, during an English attack against an Abenaki village on the coast of Maine, missionary priest Sebastian Kase was shot by the English at the door of his church, scalped, and his body mutilated. That did nothing for Acadian spirits. At about the same time, 50 Micmac Indians, friends of the French, surprised the English garrison at Annapolis Royal, killing two soldiers and seriously wounding a dozen more. That irked the English, who claimed the Acadians had instigated the Indian raid. The Brits burned many of the Acadians' homes and sent their priests away.

In the fall of 1726, Major Lawrence Armstrong became provincial administrator, and was determined to force the Acadians to take the oath of allegiance. Once again they refused to take it unless it contained a clause that they would not be forced to fight against the French. Armstrong agreed to insert the clause, and did — in the margin of the French translation, only. But he sent the English version, without the clause, to London.

Finally, in 1739, Governor Phillips got what he and the British Crown wanted. He reported that all Acadians "of all parishes" had taken the conditional oath. He had finally promised not only that they would not have to fight against the French and the Indians, but also that they could maintain their Catholic faith. The Acadians, in return, promised not to fight against the English.

The Acadians became known in England and in New England as "French Neutralists," and were themselves convinced that their neutral status had been officially granted to them by Governor Phillips. Besides, they were promised freedom of religion and their lands would not be taken from them.

The English wanted the Acadians out, but weren't strong enough to force the issue — not yet.

The War of Austrian Succession, which ended in 1740, was fought over whether a fat lady named Maria Theresa would inherit the Hapsburg Empire in Europe. It had nothing to do with Acadie, except that the French jumped in on one side of the war and the British jumped in on the other. Whenever that happened, the Acadians seemed sure to get caught in the middle.

It came at a time when things in the Cajun homeland were settling down some, perhaps settling down too much. During the 1720s there had been two incidents that deepened the animosity between the Acadians and the English, but the next decade brought relative peace and prosperity. Then things began to fall apart.

On March 24, 1724, during an English attack against an Abenaki village on the coast of Maine, missionary priest Sebastian Kase was shot by the English at the door of his church, scalped, and his body mutilated. That did nothing for Acadian spirits. At about the same time, 50 Micmac Indians, friends of the French, surprised the English garrison at Annapolis Royal, killing two soldiers and seriously wounding a dozen more. That irked the English, who claimed the Acadians had instigated the Indian raid. The Brits burned many of the Acadians' homes and sent their priests away.

In the fall of 1726, Major Lawrence Armstrong became provincial administrator, and was determined to force the Acadians to take the oath of allegiance. Once again they refused to take it unless it contained a clause that they would not be forced to fight against the French. Armstrong agreed to insert the clause, and did — in the margin of the French translation, only. But he sent the English version, without the clause, to London.

Finally, in 1739, Governor Phillips got what he and the British Crown wanted. He reported that all Acadians "of all parishes" had taken the conditional oath. He had finally promised not only that they would not have to fight against the French and the Indians, but also that they could maintain their Catholic faith. The Acadians, in return, promised not to fight against the English.

The Acadians became known in England and in New England as "French Neutralists," and were themselves convinced that their neutral status had been officially granted to them by Governor Phillips. Besides, they were promised freedom of religion and their lands would not be taken from them.

The English wanted the Acadians out, but weren't strong enough to force the issue — not yet.

The War of Austrian Succession, which ended in 1740, was fought over whether a fat lady named Maria Theresa would inherit the Hapsburg Empire in Europe. It had nothing to do with Acadie, except that the French jumped in on one side of the war and the British jumped in on the other. Whenever that happened, the Acadians seemed sure to get caught in the middle.
strategic military posts that would isolate the Acadians and block communications with the French in Quebec or their troublesome neighbors at Louisbourg.

LOUISBOURG

The English ministers who negotiated the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 had not been very wise. True, they had gained Acadie, but it was an Acadie with ill-defined and disputed boundaries — and one that — whatever its boundaries — was difficult to defend. But worse, the British in giving Cape Breton Island to the French, destroyed the military value of their hold on the Annapolis Basin.

King Louis of France saw that Cape Breton guarded the Saint Lawrence. That’s why, beginning in 1720, he’d built and fortified Louisbourg, against the inevitable day when war would flare afresh. Englanders showed up. William Edward colonies from as far south as Breton’s Island to the French, took the dangerous to be Louisbourg.

Even as the British sailed into sight and prepared to land troops, the Governor and his key lieutenants were dancing the night away at a ball at du Chambron’s palace.

The Governor counted on the protection of powerful batteries that commanded the entrance to Louisbourg. And the British respected them still. They knew that to enter Louisbourg basin would have been suicide. Not even the British warships that had joined the colonists would attempt it.

Chambron, in whose hands rested the safety of Louisbourg. As the attack loomed, his garrison was in mutiny over lack of pay and poor provisions. He was outran- neered even if the garrison would fight, and — despite all — he turned down reinforcements from Quebec (which instead were used in an unsuccessful attack on Annapolis.)

Even as the British sailed into sight and prepared to land troops, the Governor and his key lieutenants were dancing the night away at a ball at du Chambron’s palace.

The Governor counted on the protection of powerful batteries that commanded the entrance to Louisbourg. And the British respected them still. They knew that to enter Louisbourg basin would have been suicide. Not even the British warships that had joined the colonists would attempt it.

1749. Clanging bells and booming cannon woke the town and, long before dawn, townsfolk had begun a day-long celebration that would spread across New England with the good news.

The English immediately began transporting the Cape Breton population to Brest, France.

Pierre Louis Allain was apparently among them. He died at Brest that year, one of the earliest Acadians to be deported. His widow, Marguerite Le Blanc, apparently remained in Acadie, and eventually turned up as a refugee at St. Pierre de Mignelon with many of her children in 1796, after the wholesale exile of the Acadian people a decade earlier.

The Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748 ended the War of Austrian Succession, and, much to New England’s dismay and disgust, Louisbourg was returned to the French. The treaty commissioners could still not agree on a definitive boundary for Nova Scotia, and, in 1760, the governor of Canada sent troops to protect French claims in Beauséjour, Baie Verte and at the mouth of the St. John River. Indians, allied with the French, attacked British outposts regularly. There was bound to be more fighting.

In fact, Louisbourg would be retaken by the British in 1758. But, by then, the would be cast in a new light. Englanders showed up. William Edward colonies from as far south as Breton’s Island to the French, destroyed the military value of their hold on the Annapolis Basin.

Military historian Fairfax Downey described it this way: Guardian of the approaches to the St. Lawrence River, gateway to the heart of French Canada. Louisbourg also stood sentinel over the immensely valuable cod fisheries of the Banks. Mean (?) hailed it as another Gibraltar and as a worthy successor to Dunkirk. As Dunkirk had been “a pilot held at England’s head,” so the guns of Louisbourg marched the lifelines of the New England colonies.

So, when border warfare erupted in North America, the colonists of Massachusetts decided that Louisbourg was too strong and too dangerous to be left in French hands.

Governor William Shirley invited colonists from as far south as Pennsylvania to join an expedition against Acadie, but only New Englanders showed up. William Pepperell of Kittery, Maine, a merchant and lumberman with practically no military experience, was named commander. He brought 90 ships and 4,200 men to Louisbourg on the morning of April 20, 1758. But even these would not be enough without a little luck and the combination of French folly and British trickery.

Bad weather delayed the British, and the delay took away the element of surprise. But even when the French knew that the attack was coming, Jean Frederic Philippeaux, Comte de Maurepas, France’s Minister of Marine, doubted that the fort was seriously threatened. He delayed sending vital naval aid that might have made the difference when battle was joined.

And Downey reports: “High also on the list of fortune’s gifts to the enemy was the gross incompetence of Governor (Dupon) du Chambon, in whose hands rested the safety of Louisbourg.” As the attack loomed, his garrison was in mutiny over lack of pay and poor provisions. He was out-
Orleans. The English, meanwhile, were penned behind the Alleghenies, and France claimed all of North America from the Alleghenies to the Rockies, from Florida and Mexico to the North Pole. She held the St. Lawrence and the Mississippi — and controlled these waterways from Montreal to New Orleans.

The English, meanwhile, were penned behind the Alleghenies, and France ... our Sovereign and our fathers places us in the past ... said they had no intention of again against the Iliarisb, and

But now things began to change. The Acadians who stayed in Nova Scotia believed they could be loyal British subjects while staying neutral. They thought the British would recognize their good faith. They wanted to be left alone, to live in peace on their farms, according to the guarantees they'd received.

But they were nervous. One-third of the Acadian population, about 6,000 people, had left Nova Scotia by 1752, taking refuge in New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and other French territories. But they soon found out that wasn't the best idea. At first, these refugees had been more-or-less supplied with food and clothing from Quebec and Louisbourg, but in October 1753 a missionary would write, "Many are in such a state that they cannot work in winter, having nothing to cover themselves against the cold, day or night."

These who stayed on the old lands fared better, for awhile. In August 1752, Governor Cornwallis returned to England and was replaced by Captain Peregrine Hopson, a much more moderate man. The Acadians saw a glimmer of hope. But Hopson got sick and had to resign after only 15 months in office. He was replaced by Charles Lawrence, a man both hated and feared by the Acadians.

It turned out they had good cause. Not only was Lawrence influenced by politics, he was influenced by greed. Just as the Acadian populations had begun to swell, so had the populations in New England. These English colonies needed a place to grow. And there were no better lands to grow than those in Acadie.

In the beginning of June 1755, British troops were ordered to seize the arms of the Acadians in the Grand Pre area. The soldiers pretended to be on a fishing trip. Instead of sleeping in barns, as they usually did, they went two-by-two into the Acadians' houses. At midnight, each pair, quietly and without resistance, gathered all the arms and ammunition in each house. The weapons were shipped to Port Edwards. A few days later, Acadians living in other areas of Nova Scotia were ordered to turn in their weapons or be treated as rebels. Their boats were also confiscated.

On June 18 the Acadians sent a protest to Governor Lawrence:

We hope that your Excellency will be pleased to restore to us the same liberty that we enjoyed formerly, in giving us the use of our canoes, either to transport our provisions from one river to another, or for the purpose of fishing, thereby providing for our livelihood.

Moreover, our guns ... are absolutely necessary to us, either to defend our cattle which are attacked by wild beasts, or for protection of our children and ourselves ... Besides, the arms which have been taken away from us are a firm and a safe guarantee of our fidelity. It is not the gun which an inhabitant possesses that will induce him to revolt, not the privation of the same gun that will make him more faithful, but his conscience alone must induce him to maintain his oath ... Lawrence found the petition "arrogant and insidious." He hauled in 15 of the men who had signed it and tried to force them to swear allegiance immediately. They said they needed time to think about it and discuss it among themselves. Lawrence gave them the time, in jail.

The governor and his advisors, though the Acadians' refusal to take an unconditional oath meant that they intended to fight with the French and the Canadians against the English — and they knew that war was about to break out again. Bloody raids by the French and Indians and French piracy out of Louisbourg made them even more nervous. Adding to it all, constant war and bickering had fueled a growing hatred for anyone of French blood and Catholic faith.

But still the Acadians refused to take the unconditional oath. The people of Annapolis Royal met on July 16, 1755 and those of Grand Pre, Pisciquid and Cobequid on July 22, to draft an answer to Governor Lawrence:

We, and our fathers, having taken an oath of Fidelity which was approved many times, in the name of the British King ... and under the privileges of which we remained faithful and subject to His British Majesty ... will never commit the inconsistency of taking an oath which changes so much the conditions and privileges in which our Sovereign and our fathers places us in the past ... They said they had no intention of fighting against the British, and asked Governor Lawrence to free the 15 delegates still being held in jail in Halifax harbor.

Lawrence rejected all. The Acadians were told they would no longer be considered British subjects, "but as subjects of the King of France, and as such they must be hereafter treated."

One-third of the Acadian population, about 6,000 people, had left Nova Scotia by 1752.

Ships take Acadians into exile, 1755. Painting by Claude Picard, Saint-Raphael, New Brunswick, as part of a series on the Deportation of the Acadians.

We are now hatching the noble and great project of banishing the French Neutrals from this province; they have ever been our secret enemies and have encouraged the Indians to cut out our throats. If we can accomplish this expulsion, it will have been one of the greatest deeds the English in America have ever achieved; for, among other considerations, the part of the country which they occupy is one of the best soils in the world, and, in the event, we might place some good farmers on their homesteads.

In fact, Governor Lawrence had been planning the Acadian deportation for some time. He had broached the idea in London at least by 1754. Early in 1756 he had asked Judge Morris, the provincial surveyor, to prepare a report on how to go about it. Governor Shirley of Massachusetts had promised enough ships to carry away the 7,000 Acadians still in Nova Scotia.

Of an approximate population of 18,000 Acadians, about 6,000 had left Nova Scotia between 1749 and 1752. Many more died after 1752, and were continuing to flee even on the eve of their exile.

On July 31, 1755, Lawrence sent instructions to Colonel Moncton, commanding officer in the Beauséjour region:

The Acadians of the District of allan a roy, Mines and Pisciquid have ... refused to take the oath of allegiance ... and it is ... determined that they shall be removed out of the country as soon as possible ... For this purpose, orders are given for a sufficient number of
transports to be sent up (Chignecto Bay) ... for taking them on board, by whom you will receive particular instructions as to the manner of their being disposed of, the place of their destination, and every other thing necessary for that purpose.

In the meantime it will be necessary to keep this measure as secret as possible to prevent their attempting to escape and to carry off their cattle. In order to effect this, you will endeavor to fall upon some strategy to get the men, both young and old — especially the heads of families — into your power, and detain them till the transports should arrive, as they may be ready to be shipped off; for, when this is done, it is not much to be feared that the women and children will attempt to go away and carry off the cattle.

A s their whole stock of cattle and corn forfeited to the crown by their rebellion must be secured and applied toward a reimbursement of the expense the Government will have incurred in transporting them out of the country, care must be taken that nobody make any bargain for purchasing them under any color or pretext whatsoever; if they do so the sale will be void, for the inhabitants have now no property in their name, nor will they be allowed to carry away the least thing save their ready money and household furniture.

On August 9, the Acadians of the Chignecto Isthmus were ordered to meet at Fort Cumberland, to hear "the reading of orders of His Excellency, the Governor."

Suspicious, they refused to go.
The meeting was postponed to the next day. Then, some 400 Acadians went to the fort after being assured that the gathering was only about "arrangements of the Governor of Halifax for the conservation of their farms."

Every Acadian who attended was taken prisoner.

Detachments of soldiers then went through the countryside to arrest the rest of the population.

But most of the Acadians hid in the woods, and, in fact, nearly two-thirds of the area residents escaped immediate deportation. But those who went to Fort Cumberland and had been taken prisoner were placed on ships to be sent into exile.

"One hundred and forty women threw themselves hopelessly and blindly onto the English ships to regain their husbands," wrote the parish priest, Father LeGuere.

Winslow, in charge of the Grand Pre region, called the Acadians together there on September 5. His proclamation ordered all men and boys over the age of ten to gather in the church to hear "His Majesty's intentions." Those who didn't show up would forever lose to their goods, cattle, and real estate.

Four hundred and eighteen men gathered at the church. They were apprehensive. The British now held the upper hand, and the Acadians knew it.

When all of the men were in the church, the doors were closed and locked. The men were placed under arrest and told that their lands and goods were to be plundered. They and their families were to be put aboard ships and sent elsewhere.

"They were greatly struck," Winslow wrote in his journal, "although I believe they did not imagine that they were actually to be removed. This ended the memory of September, a day of great fatigue and trouble."

The transports arrived at Grand Pre on September 10. Winslow wrote, "... the inhabitants, sadly and with great sorrow, abandoned their homes. The women, in great distress, carried their newborn or their young children in their arms. Others pulled carts with their household effects and crippled parents. It was a scene of confusion, despair and desolation."

Winslow did make an attempt to keep families together, but he had enough ships. Women were loaded onto ships other than the ones that carried their husbands and children. Entire families, believing that they were separating for only a few days, would be so widely dispersed that they would never meet again.

When all was done, some 7,000 Acadians had been gathered up, sent from their homes aboard 24 crowded ships, and scattered along the Atlantic Seaboard and elsewhere. Some 2,000 Acadians went to Massachusetts; 700 Acadians to Connecticut, more than 300 to New York, 500 to Pennsylvania, nearly a thousand to Maryland, 400 or more to Georgia, another thousand to the Carolinas.

Their tragedy fell just short of genocide. Lord Jeffrey Amherst, one of the British commanders (who got a college named in his honor) was all for it. In a letter to a Col. Bouquet, he urged: "You will do well to try to spread smallpox by means of blankets and by every other means which might help exterminate that abominable race."

Twelve hundred Acadians reached Virginia in the fall of 1755, but were not allowed off the ships. Nobody had told the Virginians that the Acadians were coming. They had no room for them. Particularly after smallpox did infect the ships. Finally, these Acadians were sent to England in the beginning of 1756, and imprisoned there. Twenty of them died in prison. Some would one day make it to France, but these would fare little better. They were foreigners there, too.

Their families had been in North America for 150 years.

Their ways, customs, even speech, were already far different than that of the motherland.

Some historians believe that a number of the Acadians deported to Maryland, the Carolinas and Georgia reached Louisiana in 1756.

We know, for example, that the Acadians who were sent to South Carolina had no difficulty in getting permission to leave. A number of those sent to other American colonies headed for the Mississippi. Others escaped from the Virginia transports before they were sent on to England.

We know that scores of Acadian exiles from New York and some of the New England colonies headed for the West Indies. But the tropical climate did not agree with them, and they soon considered the move to French Louisiana.

And what would happen to their old lands in Acadie?

In 1758, after the capture of Louisbourg, a proclamation by the Nova Scotia government appeared in the Boston Gazette, offering free land grants in the once-Acadian province. A second proclamation, in 1759, described the wonderful attractions of the land and offered liberal terms to settlers.

In April 1758, a five-man committee was sent from Connecticut to "spy out the land." They met with Governor Lawrence and his council at Halifax and were assured that the lands were all that they had been advertised to be. Even more, ships from Nova Scotia would be put at their service to transport the immigrants, their stock, and their furniture.

Five years in desolation the Acadia land had lain. Five golden Harvest Moons had wood the fallow fields in vain.

Five times the winter snows had slept and summer sunsets smile

On lonely clumps of willow and fruit trees growing wild.

There was silence in the forest and along the Minas shore
And not a habitation from Canard to Beauséjour.
But many a blackened rafter and many a broken wall
Told the story of Acadia's prosperity and fell.

But the simple Norman peasant folks shall fill the land no more,
For the vessels from Connecticut anchored by the shore.
And many a patient Purita, his mind with Scripture stored,
Rejoices he has found at last his "garden of the Lord."

Lagneyaux's Meat Market & Slaughter House
The arrival of the Acadians in Louisiana can be dated from the settlement of Salvador Mouton, his nephew, Jean Diogene Mouton, and their families. They are believed to be the first to reach here in the mass migration that would eventually bring two-thirds of the survivors of the Acadian exodus to Louisiana.

The Moutons left old Acadie in 1764, during the year of turmoil before the deportation. Salvador's son, Jean, was founder of Lafayette. It is for him that St. John Cathedral is named. Another descendant, Alexandre Mouton, would become the state's first Acadian governor (also the first elected as a Democrat and the first to be selected by popular vote rather than chosen by the legislature). Over the years the Moutons would become both widespread and influential. One family historian counts 6,000 Moutons who still carry the family name, and another 6,000 who are married into other families.

These first Acadian settlers came to Louisiana by foot and by raft, directly from Canada, walking along the Great Lakes to the upper reaches of the Mississippi, then hiking and rafting down to Louisiana. They settled on the west bank of the Mississippi in what is today St. James Parish, near the home of Mathias Frederick, a German who was probably the first white settler of the region.

Other Acadian families followed the Moutons to St. James in the years after the dispersion: Bergeron, Saunder, LeBlanc, Rohr, LeBlanc, Guidry, Cormier, Martin, Louis Pierre Aimeeuse, and more. They would not be far behind. We know him better by his name: Pierre Arceneaux would not be far behind years after the dispersion: Bergeron, Saunder, LeBlanc, Rohr, LeBlanc, Guidry, Cormier, Martin, Louis Pierre Aimeeuse, and more. They would not be far behind.

At Cabahannocer, Cantrelle developed an indigo plantation and prospered. He became commander of the past, made friends with the Indians, welcomed the Acadians, and built a dynasty and a church, in which he was eventually buried.

Huge sugar and cotton plantations would one day turn this stretch of Mississippi River bank opened by the Fredericks and Cantrelles and Moutons into a prosperous part of what would be called "the Golden Coast of Louisiana," the richest stretch of real estate in antebellum North America.

At first, however, it would be known as The Acadian Coast, where the Cajuns began with fresh bread and biscuits which had been prepared for the first needy ones who might arrive. I ordered that an ox and a calf, which I had sent for upriver for my own consumption and that of those who were with me, be given to them. This was done on the same night that they encountered the launch which was transporting them, and the pilot assured me that immediately upon receiving these animals they slaughtered them and ate the meat raw.

Ulloa had given this aid on his own authority. He didn't know what the position of official Spain might be. On September 29, 1766, he sent a letter to his superiors in Spain asking for instructions:

The arrival of these people, together with those of the same kind who were already in the colony and others who might come, is a very great problem for me and for anyone else who might govern because from the moment they arrive it is necessary to spend money on them in providing hospitalities of life and to continue to do so until they have a way to subsist by themselves, which takes at least two years.

In order for them to establish themselves it is necessary to provide them with arms and ammunitions, tools and everything else. It is necessary to give widows and orphans everything and to provide them all a surgeon, medicines, and special diets, since shortly after their arrival and in the first two years they become ill a great deal and a high number of them die...

On the one hand, one is moved by charity and the obligations of hospitality, for if one fails to help them they will without doubt perish, and on the other hand one is pressed by the obligation not to use funds for purposes which are not determined by royal decision. Spain recognized the value of the Acadian settlers. She needed warm bodies to populate the Louisiana colony. The Acadians knew how to build dikes to hold...
back the Mississippi River and how to reclaim lowlands. They could help feed a growing New Orleans with their produce and fish.

The exiles were also good soldiers, as they had shown "against the British as well as the type of warfare conducted against the Indians." Such citizens were important to Ulloa, "in this colony which must always depend upon the settlers for its defense."

Ulloa sent the Acadians to present-day St. James Parish and up the river to its interaction with Bayou Manchac, where they built a fort and a town called St. Gabriel de Manchac. The town remains today. The Willowglen electrical generating station marks the site of the old fort.

In addition to land, each Acadian family was given six hens, one rooster, one cow and calf, corn, gunpowder, bullets and a musket.

Ulloa's successors would broaden Spanish defenses against the British and others by placing settlements along important Mississippi River distributaries, and using Acadians to populate them. The Acadian emigres would be sent down Bayou Manchac to Galveston (abandoned in the 1800s) and to French Settlement (still a thriving community). He placed another settlement at LaFouche des Chetimachas -- Indian lands at the fork of Bayou LaFouche and the Mississippi River today's Donaldsonville. Another new settlement was established down Bayou LaFouche at Vacheria, now Plattnerville.

From these places the Acadians would spread up and down the Mississippi River, along Bayou Manchac to the Amite River, down Bayou LaFouche, southwest from Donaldsonville. The area would become known as The Acadian Coast. It would become one of the ironies of our history that more French-speaking settlers would come to Louisiana during the 40 years of Spanish rule than during the entire period of French control.

### Pierre Allain

If you follow the Mississippi River through Iberville Parish, due south of Baton Rouge, you will come to a tortuous series of bends and twists that send the river curling back and forth upon itself. The town of St. Gabriel sits on the east bank of the river at the center of the second bend. Here you will find the oldest church still standing in Louisiana, Saint Gabriel d'Iberville, built by the Acadians in 1769.

The men who built it were named Babin, Blanchard, Breaux, Chaisson, Cloitre, Hebert, LeBlanc, Melanson, Richard, Rivet, Trahan. Most of them had come to Louisiana the year before, 1768, after giving up hope of being repatriated to their farms in old Acadie. Another of them was named Pierre Allain. He was my grandfather's grandfather's great-grandfather. This is his tale.

**In addition to land, each Acadian family was given six hens, one rooster, one cow and calf, corn, gunpowder, bullets and a musket.**

**At the time of the dispersion in 1765, thousands of Acadians were sent to English colonies up and down the Atlantic Seaboard, to Massachusetts, to Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, to North and South Carolina and Georgia. Pierre Allain and most of the others who built the Saint Gabriel Church were among the thousand sent to Maryland.**

In November 1755, The Annapolis Gazette reported: "Last Sunday, the last of four vessels arrived from Nova Scotia: this brings their number to more than 900 in 15 days. Since these poor people were stripped of their farms and sent here indigent and naked for some political reason, Christian charity, the only sentiment common to humanity, is called upon from all to come to help, each according to his means, these human beings so worthy of our compassion.

The call went largely unheeded, because the Acadians had arrived in a Maryland inflamed by fear of the French, who had begun jockeying for supremacy in the Ohio River Valley in 1749. French dominance there threatened Maryland's security. Maryland wanted Frenchmen out of the region, not new ones brought into it.

Anxiety toward the French had grown worse during a wave of popular protest that swept Maryland following Gen. Edward Braddock's defeat by outnumbered French forces at the Battle of the Wilderness on July 9, 1755, and by Indian raids on the British frontier that followed that defeat.

The Acadians were exiled just as the paranoia peaked.

Of the 1,600 inhabitants of Grand Pre in old Acadie, 420 were sent to Maryland aboard the ships Elizabeth and Leopard in September 1755. Another 493 Acadians from the village of Pisiquid came there aboard two other ships, the Dolphin and the Ranger, in late November and early December 1755.

Because of overcrowding and winter storms that had delayed the ships at Boston, provisions were depleted.

Jonas Green, editor of the Annapolis paper, lamented: "While they have lain in this port, the town has been at considerable charge in supporting them, as they appear very needy, and quite exhausted in provisions; and it cannot be expected that the
were at the mercy of the less friendly Protestant majority. Some Acadians were able to do what little work they could find, and gradually improved their lot — though never rising out of poverty. Many, debilitated by age, illness or malnutrition, were driven to begging in the streets.

Writing to his son on January 9, 1769, Charles Carrol reported the exiles had been reduced to a "state of... Misery, Poverty, and Rags." After the end of the French and Indian War in 1763, the Acadians in the various English colonies sent petitions and a census to the French ambassador in London, begging the French government to try to send them back to Canada. According to their census of 1763, there were 1,043 Acadians left in Massachusetts, 666 in Connecticut, 382 in Pennsylvania, 250 in South Carolina, 249 in New York, 185 in Georgia, 802 in Maryland. Still in Acadie were 694 at Halifax, plus 87 on the St. John River.

The British government said it would allow the Acadians to leave for any French possession within 18 months of the treaty ratification, but many of them could not scrape up the money to go. A good number of the exiles remained in Maryland. Nearly 20 years after the dispersion, in 1781, a Father Robin wrote of a flourishing Acadian colony in Baltimore:

They still preserve the French language and remain very attached to all that belonged to the country of their ancestors, especially their religion. I could not help but congratulate them on their piety and recall the virtues of their ancestors. I thus reminded them of memories too dear to be mentioned, and as a result they broke into tears.

But many of the Acadians eventually left Maryland for Louisiana, many of them traveling an overland route to the Tennessee River and then floating down it to the Mississippi. Pierre Allain and his family went by sea, taking 78 days to sail from Baltimore to New Orleans.

A document signed by Julian Alvarez at New Orleans on July 27, 1767, gives a list of the Acadian arrivals. A note at the end reports that "During the 78-day voyage... from the Port of Baltimore, Armand Hebert, Head of Family, and Marie Landry died. Olivier Babin and Marguerite Hernandez were dead.

Less than a month later the new arrivals were on their way to new homes in the wilderness, departing New Orleans on Aug. 8.

On Jan. 14, 1767, Joseph de Onieta, commandant at Saint Gabriel, had reported on conditions there:

The savages of different nations come here very frequently, and are very bothersome and important; so much so, that every time they come for a talk, and after having given them their presents, they bother us for food and cloth. We try to dissuade them and tell them that we do not have all the necessities... Their reply is that they are hungry, they are naked, there is no harvest, and finally that this is their land, sprinkling in a few bad sounding phrases in French.

These incidents happen when they have already been to the English (which they ordinarily do) and get here full of brandy. And as they are drunk on this liquor, they become agitated and ask for every thing they can think of with roughness and a tone of arrogance, as if they were their masters. But we try to mitigate and calm with polite and wise words, putting them off to another day and time.

Land was distributed to Pierre Allain and his fellow travelers by Oct. 15, 1767, when Onieta sent a list to New Orleans containing the names of 49 heads of families and their grants. On Oct. 20 he sent another message.

On the 15th at two in the afternoon all of the Acadian Heads of Family were established on their respective lands, with a twelve yard space between each of them for the road... All of this has been carried out with much difficulty... for less than ten of the 418 men, women and boys who were forced to support... France was not the Promised Land. Living conditions for the Acadians were wretched from the very beginning. Many, debilitated by age, illness or malnutrition, were driven to begging in the streets.

France was not the Promised Land. Living conditions for the Acadians were wretched from the very beginning. Many, debilitated by age, illness or malnutrition, were driven to begging in the streets.

They still preserve the French language and remain very attached to all that belonged to the country of their ancestors, especially their religion. I could not help but congratulate them on their piety and recall the virtues of their ancestors.
outset. Once they had been crowded aboard ships and ferried across the English Channel to Moriaix and St. Malo in May and June of 1763 — after eight years in England — the Acadians were housed in barracks where smallpox, once again, claimed hundreds of lives.

The French officials were equally at a loss over what to do with this influx of foreigners as were the Anglos in the Atlantic colonies of North America. It was probably only natural that the Acadians would become pawns in French imperial schemes.

With the end of the Seven Years' War — the English-French feud that had finally brought about the Acadian exile — Etienne Francois, duc de Choiseul, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, wanted to revitalize what remained of the French empire. He saw the Acadians as potential colonists to be sent to the French Caribbean and elsewhere. In late 1763 he began a propaganda campaign designed to entice the displaced Acadians to the jungles of Cayenne (French Guiana) on the north coast of South America. Several hundred were lured there by descriptions of a tropical paradise. Almost all of them fell prey to the heat and humidity.

With the collapse of the Cayenne colony, Abbe Louis Joseph LeLoutre, the former vicar general in Acadie, proposed an Acadian colony on Belle Isle en Mer, a windswept, rocky island off the coast of Brittany. Colonization began in early August. 1765 with Acadian families from Moriaix and St. Malo.

The Acadians could grow nothing in stone, and many died on Belle Isle en Mer — including Pierre's mother. The colony was plagued with drought, crop failure, livestock epidemics and high taxes. Unable to pay the taxes or to get an extension from provincial officials, the Acadians were forced to abandon their homes once again. The Belle Isle colony collapsed in 1772. The families were moved back to the maritime ports of France. Again, they failed to find acceptance among the native population. They sank deeper into poverty.

The disillusioned Acadians grasped at every opportunity to leave France for any foreign country or colony that might offer a chance to be reunited with their fellows, for their agrarian lifestyle to be rebuit. In late 1765 and 1766 hundreds sought refuge in the Falkland Islands off the coast of Argentina. Most of these soon returned, penniless, to France.

Then, just as the idea of moviing from France seemed to be dying, there came a new hope. In September 1766, Jean Baptists Semer, who had settled in the Attakapas District of Louisiana (as the region around St. Martinville was known), wrote to his father in France and described the "benefits extended by ... Louisiana's newly installed Spanish administration to him and to all of his comrades."

Word of Louisiana's apparently thriving Acadian community spread rapidly. The Acadians in France asked to be sent to Louisiana. The government said it would cost too much.

The Acadians were trapped in France. Many worked small, poor plots on large estates, hoping to sharecrop their way to land of their own. In the cities they were regarded as parasites, since few had skills useful there.

Then there was a plan to settle 2,000 of them on 15,000 unworked arpents owned by the Marquis de Perusse des Cars. It was pitiful land. There was no fresh water. The crops failed. By mid-1776, fewer than 300 Acadians remained on the sterile land. Most of them moved to Rouen, Caen, La Rochelle, Bordeaux, Nantes.

Next, came a plan to place the exiles in Corsica. Then, with the hope that the American Revolution might oust the British from Canada, there was a plan to send the exiles back there. But still, in the back of the Acadian minds, there was Louisiana, where kin and neighbor had found homes.

Finally in 1783, Henri de Peyroux de la Coudreniere, a Frenchman who'd made and lost a fortune in Louisiana, provided the catalyst to bring the Acadians back to North America. He would rebuild his fortune through commissions paid by the Spanish, who were seeking Louisiana settlers.

Though Peyroux had married an Acadian, he was viewed as a Frenchman, suspected by the Acadians. To gain credibility among the exiles in France, Peyroux launched his resettlement program through an Acadian intermediary, Oliver Terrio, a Nantes cobbler whom he contacted under the pretext of having Mme. Peyroux's shoes fixed.

The Acadians were still suspicious. A petition was circulated among them at Nantes, Morlaix, Rennes, St. Malo, Caen and Cherbourg, asking the king for permission to emigrate. It drew only five signatures. But Peyroux and Terrio propa-
intersection of the Vermilion River and Bayou Que de Tortue, near what today is the town of Milton, almost dead center of what today we call Acadiana. He'd finally found home...

During the Atlantic crossing, Pierre met Agnes Broussard, widow of Pierre Poier. They were married on Jan 13, 1789, but she died soon afterwards. On April 20, 1790, he married again, to Catherine Galman, widow of Benoit Hargrave. They would have nine children, one of them being Pierre Vincent Jr.

Pierre Vincent Jr. would marry Sarah Celeste (Sally) Ryan, the daughter of Jacob Ryan Sr. Ryan had migrated from Georgia to the region around Perry's Bridge in Vermilion Parish, but in 1817 moved to Calcasieu Parish. One of his sons, Isaac, moved also to Calcasieu, where, we are told, he met up with Jim Bowie. It was perhaps an unfortunate meeting. Isaac Ryan's name can be found among those who followed Bowie to the Alamo and died there with him.

Pierre Vincent Jr. and Sally Ryan also moved to Calcasieu. They were among the first 10 settlers in those parts. If you don't count the Indians, which few people do. They were probably among the first five. They would leave their mark.

The main thoroughfare through Lake Charles is named Ryan Street, after Jacob Ryan Jr., who opened a sawmill on the lakefront, claimed the land around it, then sold it by the 100-foot rope length through what is now the city's downtown. (The story goes that, if you wanted to buy land from him, you'd find him rocking on his front porch, with a coil of rope alongside his chair. "I want to buy some land," you'd say. "Measure it off, he'd say, and throw you the rope.")

Pierre Vincent Jr. and Sally Ryan settled across the river from Lake Charles and reared 10 children at a homestead still known as Vincent Settlement.

Before all was said and done, the Ryan's (along with some others) had up and founded a town. The Vincents stayed on the farm and raised cattle and children.

BEAUSOLEIL BROUSSARD

Many Acadians fled into hiding during those fall and winter months of 1758, when the British were rounding up their neighbors to send them into exile. Considerable numbers, fleeing in small groups, escaped to what they thought to be French territory in today's New Brunswick. It wasn't until late in 1758, three years after Le Grand Derangement, that the English finally succeeded in burning the last of the Acadian villages, along the upper Petitcodiac River (in New Brunswick near today's Moncton). Yet they still met with resistance. Many Acadians stayed in the area, hiding in the woods, living off the land, and harassing the English whenever and however they could.

One of their leaders was Joseph "Beausoleil" Broussard, a militia captain and resistance leader who built an almost legendary reputation as a sharp-shooter and guerrilla fighter.

He was called Beausoleil because he was one of the first to settle the little village of the name (now Boundary Creek, New Brunswick). Another variation is that his beautiful sunny smile earned him that nickname.

His father, Jean Francois Broussard, had come from La Rochelle, France, in the spring of 1761 aboard the ship L'Orangeraie. In Port Royal, 10 years later, Jean Francois married Catherine Richard, daughter of Michel Richard and Madeleine Blanchard. They had 10 children: Marie (1682), Madeleine (1683), Pierre (1684), Catherine (1686), Francois (1690), Elizabeth (1691), Claude (1697), Joseph (1702), Alexandre (1703), and Jean Baptiste (1705).

Jean François left Port Royal in 1688 and settled for a time at Chipuody. He returned to Port Royal a few years later, but his two sons, Joseph and Alexandre, stayed on the Peticodiac, marrying sisters from Chipuody (Agnes and Marguerite Thibodeaux). Joseph Broussard and Agnes Thibodeaux also had 10 children: Jean Gregoire (1726), Joseph (1727), Victor (1728), Raphael (1733), Isabelle (1735), Timote (1741), Francois (1742), Claude (1748), Francois (1750), and Armand (1754).

(As it is Armand Broussard's house that has been restored and now stands at Vermillionville, the historic attraction at Lafayette.)

After the dispersal, guerrillas led by Beausoleil Broussard successful fought the British to a stand-still along the Peticodiac River until 1758. According to one account, his resistance was so effective that British troops at nearby Fort Cumberland were afraid to leave its walls. Broussard matched his success on land with piratical raids on coastal shipping.

But wits and gumption can carry you only so far. Despite the resistance, the British methodically cleared old Acadie, laying waste as they went, leaving the land bare. The final Acadian enclave at Louisbourg fell in 1759. Quebec fell to the British soon after and all of Canada with it. The refugees lost hope; there was no place to go.

On Nov. 16, 1759, faced with the prospect of starvation and a fast-approaching Canadian winter, Joseph, his brother, Alexandre, and Jean Basque and Simon Martin delivered a petition to the British at Fort Cumberland, giving up the fight. Jean and Michel Bourg led another group of starving Acadians to the fort a few days later. All of them were sent to Halifax, where they were held until the end of hostilities in 1763. They were not deported, most likely, because there was no shipping available, and by now, there was no place to send them. The other English colonies had filled their Acadians.

Instead, Broussard and his followers were put to work building and maintaining the dikes the Acadians had built to reclaim tidal lands.

When the Treaty of Paris was signed in 1763, some 1,700 Acadian prisoners remained in Nova Scotia. There were rumors that they might be sent back to France, but these were only rumors. Then there was talk of being sent to Quebec, but the Acadians who had already fled there had found rough going.

Broussard and his cohorts formed their own plan. They would sail to Santo Domingo, then to the mouth of the Mississippi River, then upriver to the Illinois country. In late November or early December 1764, Joseph Broussard charted a schooner and set sail with his family and 600 other Acadians for Santo Domingo.

Tropical heat and disease quickly took a heavy toll among them, however, and no more than 200 survivors arrived in Louisiana in February 1765, too weary to go on to Illinois.

The Louisiana governor said he would try to place Broussard and his followers on the right bank of the Mississippi "as close to (New Orleans) as possible." But the site selected flooded frequently, and was covered with dense hardwood forest. The Acadians would have to build levees and clear the land before even thinking about becoming self-sufficient and feeding themselves. It would take too long and be too expensive.

Some of Broussard's band would settle upriver at St. James, but most of them would cross the Atchafalaya Basin to the Attyakapas country...
developing post to which several Creole families had recently migrated from Fort Toulouse and Mobile (which had been ceded by the French to the English by the Treaty of 1763.)

There were only a few white men in the region then. The Poste des Attakapas (as St. Martinville was first called), had been opened some years before as part of a French plan to form a chain of forts to "protect the northern and eastern districts bordering, neighbor and enclosed by Louisiana." In addition to forts in the northern reaches of the province, the French planned military stations at "Opelousas, Attakapas, and along the frontier of Old Mexico."

The Poste des Attakapas, when the Acadianas got there, consisted of a small church, shabby barracks for the handful of soldiers gar- risoned there, and a small store where the scattered settlers of the neighborhood traded.

The treeless Attakapas plains could be settled quickly and their broad grasslands already supported huge herds of wild cattle. The govern ment needed beef to feed the growing population in New Orleans, and he needed a place to put the Acadians, who had experienced raising cattle. It seemed a natural.

At this time, Jean Antoine Bernard d'Hauterive, a retired military officer, held extensive lands on the east side of Bayou Teche. Broussard and his band would settle on lands nearby, making a living by "sharecropping" cattle for d'Hauterive.

In April 1765 Joseph and Alexandre Broussard were among the Acadian representatives who signed a compact with d'Hauterive, under which he would provide each Acadian family with five cows with calves and one bull for each of six consecutive years. At the end of six years, the Acadians were to return "the same number of cows and calves of the same age and kind, that they received initially; the remaining cattle and their increase surviving at the time (to) be divided equally between (the) Acadians and (d'Hauterive)."

At about the same time, Joseph Broussard was commissioned a captain in the Louisiana militia, because of the "honorable testimonials which the Marquis de Vaudreuil and other Governors General of Canada have accorded him in consideration of his wounds and of the courage he has given proof of in different affairs against the enemies of his majesty." He was also named "Commandant of the Acadians, who have come with him...to settle on the land of the Acapaus (Attakapas)."

The Acadians were led to the Attakapas country by Louis Andre, the royal surveyor and a veteran military engineer, and were granted lands along Bayou Teche and the Vermillion River.

According to his instructions, Andry was to work with Broussard to lay out a village and establish a commons around it, then to distribute lands beyond the commons to the Acadians in parcels sized according to the size of their families.

The government wanted the Acadians to live in the village and cultivate the outlying lands. But the Acadians decided otherwise and settled themselves on widely separated lands. The oldest of the Acadian communities west of the Atchafalaya was probably at Fausse Pointe (Loreauville today), established by June 1765. Later, ascending the Teche to the large westward bend above Parks, they founded La Pointe de Repos. But many La Pointe settlers moved away when an epidemic, most likely yellow fever, began there in early summer. Other refugees settled at Cote Gelee (the area between today's Pilette and Broussard). Others migrated to La Manque near today's Breaux Bridge. From these places they would migrate steadily westward.

Joseph Broussard settled at a place named Camp Beausoleil, near the present town of Broussard. He died on Sept. 5, 1765, but did not live to see his Acadian followers firmly settled. He died on Sept. 5, 1765, during an epidemic that swept the countryside. His brother, Alexandre, had died 13 days earlier.\[989-2464\]