Deportation of the Acadians from Île St.-Jean, 1758

By Earle Lockerby

Deportation is a defining event in Acadian history and has played a profound role in shaping the Acadian identity. The first deportation occurred in 1755 and involved 6,000 to 7,000 Acadians from the shores of the Bay of Fundy in Nova Scotia and adjacent areas. This event has largely overshadowed an equally traumatic and tragic deportation three years later in Prince Edward Island, then known as Île St.-Jean. [Throughout the French regime the British generally referred to the island as St. John’s Island or occasionally as Isle St. John’s.] Though Île St.-Jean was a colony of France and Acadia was a colony of Britain,* to a large degree these two deportations affected one people. Most of Île St.-Jean’s original settlers in 1720 came directly from France, but immigration from Acadia over more than three decades gave an increasingly Acadian complexion to the colony. By 1758 a large portion of Île St.-Jean’s population was comprised of those who had moved from Acadia prior to the deportation of 1755 or shortly thereafter.

The historiography of Acadian deportation that has developed over the past two centuries is extensive and, like the events themselves, shaped by contesting perspectives. The deportation of 1755 has attracted the interest of many historians, some of whom have been partisan and controversial. That of 1758 has been the subject of comparatively little historical attention. Research of primary documentation relating to the deportation from Île St.-Jean appears to have been confined to three or four historians writing during the late 19th and early 20th centuries and has been somewhat shallow and fragmentary. In one or two cases the resulting work is tinged with nationalistic overtones which reflect the background of the authors, a trait not uncommon among historians of that era. Surprisingly, little or no new information on the Island’s deportation has appeared during the last 70 years.

End of an Era

The fate of Île St.-Jean was sealed on 26 July 1758 when Governor Augustin de Boschenry de Drucourt surrendered the fortress at Louisbourg, following weeks of bombardment by British forces. Louisbourg had been the seat of government not only for Île Royale, (now Cape Breton) but also for Île St.-Jean. Within days the British conquerors began to repatriate French nationals (mostly military and administrative personnel and some of the townspeople at Louisbourg) and to deport all others from Île Royale and Île St.-Jean. On 8 August Lt. Col. Andrew Rollo was ordered by the commander of British forces, Major General Jeffery Amherst, to proceed from Louisbourg to Île St.-

"British Soldier" and "Acadian Settler", by David A. Webber.
Jean and arrange for the capitulation of its small French garrison. All of the settlers and the garrison there were to be taken to Louisbourg where they would be transported to France.

Under the convoy of the 24-gun HMS *Hind*, a schooner and four transports — *King of Prussia*, *Bristol*, *Dunbar* and *Catherine* — set out on 10 August for Port Lajoie, site of Île St-Jean’s garrison and administrative headquarters. The vessels carried not only 500 soldiers but also materials for the construction of a new fort at Port Lajoie which would be christened Fort Amherst. Several emissaries of Drucour were sent with the *Hind* to inform those on the Island of the terms of capitulation and of the requirement to surrender. On 17 August the flotilla sailed into the harbour. The commander of the garrison, Gabriel Rousseau de Villejouin, had been aware for some days that Louisbourg had capitulated and that British vessels would be on their way to Port Lajoie. He surrendered without firing a shot.

**Arrests Begin**

The French garrison and administrative officials were among the first to be taken into custody. The first civilian prisoners, from along the Northeast (or Hillsborough River), were brought down on 19 August, along with “three 6 Pounders” — cannons removed from a French gun emplacement at Battery Point where Miller’s Creek joins the Hillsborough River near modern-day Frenchfort. During the next week schooner-loads of inhabitants from as far away as the head of the river were brought to the waiting transports. While prisoners were being taken, work on a new fort, directed by Lieut. William Spry, was being undertaken by 150 men, including two foremen, ten carpenters, four masons, nine sodlayers and two carters. Also during this time, two priests, Pierre Cassiet of the parish of Saint-Louis-du-Nord-Est (centered in present-day Scotchfort) and Jean Biscarat of Saint-Pierre-du-Nord (St. Peters Harbour) were allowed to travel to Louisbourg to plead with officials to rescind the deportation order — a request that was denied.

On 31 August the four transports and schooner headed off to Louisbourg under convoy of the *Hind*, commanded by Capt. Robert Bond. Of the 692 passengers, approximately 130 are believed to have been military and administrative personnel and their families. In a letter to the French minister responsible for colonization, Villejouin wrote that 4,000 settlers remained on the Island.

The convoy arrived at Louisbourg on 4 September. Military personnel were transferred to other vessels for the trip to England as prisoners of war. Administrative personnel, their families and other civilians were destined for France. Villejouin himself was sent to England with other officers and military personnel aboard HMS *York*. The civilian population, probably all removed from the shores of the Hillsborough River, were placed aboard a large transport named *Mary*.

**Operation Expanded**

Within a short time of arriving on Île St-Jean, Rollo learned that the Island’s population had been grossly underestimated by British authorities at Louisbourg who had apparently not been given accurate information by Drucour or his subordinates. Instead of finding an anticipated 400 to 500 inhabitants, Rollo soon realized that he would need to transport almost ten times this number. The *Hind’s* arrival Louisbourg alerted authorities there to the need for more transports. On 8 September Admiral Edward Boscawen wrote in his journal that he “order’d 13 Transports to be supplied with two months provisions... for 3450 French Prisoners to be received on board them at the Isle St. Johns.” Three days later he wrote that he ordered 14 transports to be convoyed by the *Hind* to Île St-Jean, to take aboard all the remaining French prisoners and to proceed to St. Malo. The 14 vessels named by Boscawen were: *Briton*, *Duke William*, *John and Samuel*, *Mathias*, *Neptune*, *Parnassus*, *Patience*, *Restoration*, *Ruby*, *Supply*, *Tamerlane*, *Three Sisters*, *Violet* and *Yarmouth*. From the smallest (*Restoration*) to the largest (*Duke William*) they varied in burden from 177 to 400 tons.

The *Hind*, 14 transports, an unnamed schooner and a snow set out from Louisbourg on 14 September but soon encountered difficult weather. Squalls and the grounding of one of the transports delayed the flotilla’s arrival at Port Lajoie until 3 October. Meanwhile it was decided that still more transports were needed, and on 18 September Boscawen ordered the *Richard and Mary*, *Scarborough* and *Mary* (not the vessel of this name previously mentioned) to proceed to Port Lajoie and place themselves under the command of Capt. Bond.

Throughout October Rollo’s soldiers rounded up residents from along the Hillsborough River and its tributaries, other rivers emptying into what is now Charlottetown Harbour, the eastern shores of Hillsborough Bay — in particular the parish of Pointe-Prime which

*French Soldier*, by David A. Webber. French military personnel were sent to England as prisoners of war. The tiny garrison surrendered without a fight.
was centered near the present Provincial Park on Orwell Bay — and from the Pinette area. On the north shore inhabitants were gathered up in the areas of Tracadie Bay, Savage Bay and St. Peters Bay. While this occurred, crews of the Hind and the transports wooded and watered their vessels and laid in supplies of beef taken from the inhabitants — all needed in quantity by the transports for the long voyage to France.

Not all inhabitants submitted to British orders to turn themselves in. Rollo informed Boscawen that "numbers have fled to Canada and carried off great quantities of cattle by means of 4 Schooners which ply from Magpec [Malpec] to ye Continent." A schooner mounting six guns was assisting fugitives to escape. Most, if not all of the fugitives escaped to the north shore of New Brunswick, principally the inner reaches of Chaleur Bay and the Miramichi area.

As October drew to a close, so did the roundup operations. Among the last prisoners taken were Father Jacques Girard of Pointe-Prime and "a fair number of inhabitants from my parish" who were embarked on the Duke William. A final count of the prisoners put aboard the transports was 2,415, not including those sent to Louisbourg earlier. However at least 600 inhabitants had to be left behind because of the lateness of the season and the need to get the transports en route to France. A few of these may have escaped deportation as a result of being sick or diseased, but the majority lived too far from Port Lajoie to be easily accessed by Rollo's troops. They were the residents of Malpec parish on the west side of Malpeque Bay, a settlement which had already been somewhat depleted by evasion.

Though unfinished, work on Fort Amherst had progressed to the point where Rollo felt that it could not be overcome without the aid of cannons. Before sailing he detached a garrison of between 150 and 190 soldiers under Capt. Johnson.

**The Odyssey Begins**

The Hind eased her way out of the harbour on 4 November, accompanied by a flotilla of transports, and headed for the Strait of Canso. From there, the Hind, Briton and Richard and Mary were to proceed to Louisbourg, while the remaining transports, laden with hapless, dejected deportees, were to set sail for France. Squalls encountered in the Strait drove ashore Tamerlane and Parnassus. The Tamerlane was refloated but the Parnassus was declared a wreck. In addition, the Richard and Mary, which was carrying British soldiers, struck a submerged rock near Ile Madame and quickly sank. Fortunately, no lives were lost in any of these mishaps. The Parnassus' passengers were put aboard other transports bound for France and another of these vessels was diverted to Louisbourg with the stranded soldiers.

It is not known whether all of the transports sent to Port Lajoie left with the Hind, or whether some preceded her and set out for France at an earlier date. The vessels destined to France needed no armed escort since they sailed under flags of truce. In any event those which left Port Lajoie with the Hind departed Nova Scotia's Chedabucto Bay for France sometime in late November. Battered by prolonged periods of exceedingly stormy weather, not all succeeded in reaching European shores. The sinking of the Duke William and Violet with the loss of almost all aboard, as these vessels neared the English Channel, is one aspect of the deportation which is relatively well known. However virtually nothing has appeared in the history books concerning the fate of the other transports and their human cargo.

---

**French military authorities designed elaborate fortifications for several settlements, including Harve St. Pierre and Port Lajoie. They were never built.**
As it turned out, at least nine, probably ten and possibly eleven transports safely crossed the Atlantic from Port Lajoie. The Tamerlane was the first to reach a French port; on 16 January, 54 passengers disembarked at St. Malo. She was followed on 23 January by the John and Samuel, Mathias, Patience, Restoration and Yarmouth which unloaded between 665 and 690 passengers. Having run low on provisions the Supply put in to the English port of Bideford about 20 December. For some unknown reason it was 2 March only when she reached St. Malo and discharged 140 passengers. Neptune reached Portsmouth around 23 December, her provisions virtually exhausted and her passengers sick. Soon after the vessel proceeded to a French port and landed her human cargo. The Three Sisters also succeeded in reaching France without mishap.

The names, ages and family relationships of the passengers aboard the Tamerlane, Supply and the five vessels which arrived at St. Malo on 23 January are all known. Also known are the names of a few passengers aboard a transport which, having been driven off course, ended up at Boulogne.

### Shipwrecks and Sinkings

The loss of the Duke William and Violet found its way into popular historical lore through the survival of a rather lengthy published account of the 13 December battle was recognized as hopeless. On this date Capt. Nichols, Father Girard and some 34 British sailors took their leave in the Duke William's cutter and longboat, leaving the remainder to a horrible fate. Within about two days these small craft safely reached the western tip of Cornwall. Nichols and his fellow deserters had left behind a third small craft, the Duke William's jolly boat. Just before the transport sank on 13 December, four male passengers managed to launch the jolly boat in which they safely made Falmouth. The number of lives lost by the sinking of the Duke William and Violet are not precisely known. Numbers provided by primary sources vary between 300 and 400 for each vessel. Father Girard reported having lost all his papers, books and other effects which quite possibly included Pointe-Prime's parish register.

On or about 23 January the Ruby, carrying 310 passengers, ran ashore on the island of Pico in the Azores. It was reported that 120 French and 23 British were saved. A chartered Portuguese schooner, the St. Catherina, took 87 French passengers to Portsmouth where they arrived on 4 February. About a week later they were transferred to a French port. From records giving the normal crew compliments of the Duke William and Ruby, it appears that those saved in both cases included all or virtually all of the crew.

It is possible that one or even two other transports were wrecked. Girard claimed in 1774 that one transport was lost on the coast of Spain, but he may have been confusing this vessel with

---

**ESTIMATED NUMBERS OF DEPORTEES AND FUGITIVES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of residents when Rollo arrived</th>
<th>4700</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General population</td>
<td>4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military and government</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number deported</td>
<td>3100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General population</td>
<td>3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military and government</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number who fled the Island</td>
<td>1400-1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number remaining on the Island at mid-1759</td>
<td>100-200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

"On 8 September, Admiral Boscawen wrote in his journal that he 'order'd 13 Transports to be supplied with two months provisions...for 3450 French Prisoners to be received on board them at the Isle St. Johns.' Sketch by David A. Webber."
the Ruby. Also, Rev. Jean-Louis Le Loutre claimed in 1768 that three of the transports sank on the high seas. No other evidence has come to light of more than three transports being lost after leaving North America and in all probability there were not more than three.

Other Misery

Many historians have highlighted the drowning of passengers on the Duke William and Violet. As tragic as the loss of life by drowning was, the loss from disease aboard the transports was undoubtedly even greater. The 600-ton Mary, which received 560 deportees in early September at Louisbourg, left that port for St. Malo on 27 September. The transport arrived off Portsmouth on 31 October leaking badly, her pumps constantly straining, unable to continue her voyage. A large number (perhaps most) of her passengers were said to be suffering from a “Malignant Distemper” and many deaths had occurred on route. Capt. Donaldson had buried 250 to 260 passengers at sea, mostly children. Medical care and other assistance was soon provided to the ailing passengers, but an investigating surgeon could perceive nothing contagious regarding the reported distemper. Rather, he indicated, “Disorders seem to proceed more from the want of the Necessaries of Life, than any other thing.” The passengers were reported to be in a starving condition and almost naked.

Evidence suggested Capt. Donaldson had not treated his passengers properly during the voyage, and also had been negligent toward them after their arrival in England.

Compounding the passengers' predicament were delays in being transferred to other vessels and sent to France. In part, these were occasioned by British navy personnel’s fears of contracting “distemper” from the passengers, despite the surgeon’s findings. Additionally, Admiral officials may have dragged their feet on account of an expectation that official protests would be ultimately lodged by the French government concerning the treatment of the Mary's passengers. It would appear that the surviving passengers of the Mary were eventually taken on two tenders to Cherbourg in the latter half of November.

In some cases whole families were wiped out. The mortality rate is known for the Mary, Tamerlane, Supply and, as a group, for the five transports which reached St. Malo on 23 January. For these vessels it ranged from 10% for the Tamerlane to 45% for the Mary. For the other transports which crossed the Atlantic without serious incident, an average mortality of 33% is a reasonable estimate and corresponds exactly to the mortality on the five ships reaching St. Malo on the same date.

When estimates are combined with known data for deaths by drowning and disease, the picture which emerges is that of Table 1. This would indicate that about half of those deported, or between 1,600 and 1,700 inhabitants, may have lost their lives before reaching Europe, and that considerably more died from illness than from drowning. In addition, it is known that many of those who reached France were immediately hospitalized there and that a significant number of these died from disease contracted aboard ship.
Local Aftermath

A small number of inhabitants of Ile St.-Jean is known to have escaped deportation simply by fleeing into the woods and hiding for some months. While a very few residents in the areas which were depopulated by the troops may have successfully cached themselves, the majority of those taking refuge in the forest were no doubt from various outlying areas, in particular the remotest major settlement, Malpec. For more than a century Acadian and other historians have claimed that those who hid were virtually all from Malpec and that from this nucleus of fugitives are descended practically all of the Acadians of Prince Edward Island. This notion is now changing, at least in part, as a result of genealogical and other research in recent decades. In fact a number of those who fled from the Island are known to have trickled back after the Treaty of Paris in 1763, if not before.*

In the spring of 1759 Governor Edward Whitmore at Louisbourg made a futile effort to take into custody those inhabitants left behind by Rollo the previous fall. Whitmore sent three vessels, two of which were armed, with soldiers to relieve the garrison which had wintered at Fort Amherst and to take in the settlers from the parish of Malpec. When the vessels reached Fort Amherst, the garrison commander advised that a short time earlier the inhabitants in question had all gone off to Canada. It is more probable that most of the parishioners had in fact left the Island the previous year and that those who remained merely again took refuge in the woods upon learning of the approach of troops from Fort Amherst or Louisbourg. The number of inhabitants who fled the Island has been variously stated by historians to be 600, about a thousand, 1,500 and “about a third of the population,” none offering any documentary or other evidence to support their assertions. One way to approximate the number of inhabitants who eluded Rollo’s soldiers is to subtract the number of deportees (about 3,100) from the total population. A problem is that the latter is not known with a high degree of accuracy. The last reliable census prior to the deportation was made in 1753 and the population is known to have expanded greatly after that.

Rollo appears to have estimated that the population was 4,100, exclusive of the garrison and administrative ranks, which, judging from his figures, seems to have numbered 132. In early September Villejouin wrote that 700 people (probably more accurately, 692) had been detained with him and that 4,000 more remained to be deported, giving a total of 4,700.

While Villejouin’s 4,000 is likely a round number estimate, it ought to be more reliable than other estimates, considering that he was the most senior official on the Island, had lived there for four years and during all that time struggled with the problems of feeding and housing a rapidly expanding population. Villejouin’s number probably did not allow for those who had by then fled the Island, but they are believed to have been quite few.

If reckoned as 4,700 minus 3,100, the number of settlers who avoided deportation is 1,600. The number French and Acadians who remained on the Island may be estimated as 100 to 200, based on several reports deriving from the 1762-1764 period from the surveyor Samuel Holland, Governor Wilmot of Nova Scotia and the commander at Louisbourg. The box “Estimated Number of Deportees and Fugitives” provides a summary of the population which was forcibly removed, those who fled and those who remained.

Mythology

Powerful, yet inaccurate portrayals of the deportation from Ile St.-Jean evolved in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and have stubbornly persisted over the years. Created and initially propagated by two or three writers, these images derive more from assumption or imagination than from fact. They have then been reinforced through repetition, as later authors take their cues from previous ones. As a result of these progressive distortions, errors and inaccuracies abound in the historiography of the deportation from Ile St.-Jean.

The 1758 deportation from Ile St.-Jean has been closely linked to, and confused with, events of the larger deportation from Acadia three years earlier. Since the earlier deportation is better known than the later one, it has been easy, though misleading, to conflate the two. Characteristics of the earlier, e.g., grossly overcrowded transports and the torching of homes, have erroneously been attributed to the later one.

It has been claimed, for example, that the inhabitants of Ile St.-Jean were thrown pell-mell into overcrowded, old and decrepit vessels of doubtful seaworthiness. No evidence has been presented that the age of these vessels was on average greater than the average age of either British or French transports generally. Available evidence is to the contrary. An inventory taken in Louisbourg in July 1758 shows that all of the transports sent to Ile St.-Jean were “fit for sea.” Of the nine transports known to have safely reached Europe from Port LaJoie, five were still in active service with the Admiralty several years after the deportation (four

"Acadian Woman and Family" and "Farmers and Oxen" by David A. Webber.

"The inhabitants succeeded in establishing a new settlement based primarily on agriculture, where they could raise their family, practice their religion and live as French subjects.

were still in service in 1763). By 1762 or 1763 at least four had crossed the Atlantic again one or more times. Some, if not all, the remaining transports may have been put back into civilian use after being discharged from the Admiralty as surplus to its needs.

Were the vessels used to transport the inhabitants of Île St.-Jean overcrowded? By the standards of the day they were not. Nor would they have been had they also carried all of the inhabitants who evaded deportation. One way to examine this issue is to consider the number of passengers per ton of vessel burden (passenger/burden ratio). Ships bringing Scottish emigrants to the Maritimes in the 1770s typically had ratios of 0.8 to 1.0. The intended ratio for the deportation from Île St.-Jean was 0.9 passengers per ton of vessel. Because of the numbers who escaped deportation, the average ratio was in fact 0.6 as the vessels left Port Lajoie. As a result of mishaps in the Strait of Canso and reassigned of shipwrecked passengers to other vessels, the ratio climbed, but was still less than 0.8. These numbers compare to an intended ratio of 2.0 for the deportation of 1755 and to ratios that in reality were higher, reaching even 2.9 for one vessel.

The most florid of the mythic images relating to the deportation from Île St.-Jean concerns the fate of the churches, homes and other buildings. These portrayals probably originate with careless extrapolations to Île St.-Jean of real events in Acadia. H.R. Casgrain, a Québec-born priest, seems to have been the first to portray fiery scenes on Île St.-Jean in a book published in 1894, the first major French language history of Prince Edward Island. Even its title — Une Seconde Acadie — is suggestive of such extrapolations. Casgrain writes of dwellings, churches and priests' homes "being given up to the flames...nothing remained, absolutely nothing but ashes: fire and sword consumed everything." An Island priest, John MacMillan, in 1905 echoed many of Casgrain's words in his history of the Catholic church in Prince Edward Island. In the 1920s another Island historian, J.-H. Blanchard, wrote in precisely the same vein as Casgrain and MacMillan, using whole paragraphs taken verbatim from Casgrain. More than half a dozen other writers have continued the process until relatively recent years, though the grandiloquent language has been toned down.

What happened with the buildings on Île St.-Jean in 1758 is perhaps best related by people who were there or were in some way involved. Whitmore wrote to the British prime minister: "...my Lord Rollo reports the Island to be a Rich Soil, a fine Country and well worth being Settled for which Reason He has not Destroyed the Houses." In 1764-5 Samuel Holland recorded the existence of 398 houses, two churches and nine mills. This number of houses would accommodate a population of 2,400 people, given the average size of a family on Île St.-Jean in the early 1750s. However, because of heavy migration of Acadians to Île St.-Jean after 1752 and accompanying destitution, there undoubtedly followed a considerable amount of "doubling up" — more than one family under one roof. This probably would have persisted to some degree until 1758.

Moreover, it is known that Holland did not enumerate all buildings. He enumerated no mills at Malpec, for instance, yet surveyor Charles Morris observed three mills were there in 1768 — prior to British settlement. Holland did not mention a church in Lot 39, which included the parish of Saint-Pierre-du-Nord, or in Lot 36, including the parish of Saint-Louis-du-Nord-Est, though other sources indicate that the churches in these two parishes were still standing some years after the Holland survey was completed.

There is not merely a lack of evidence that houses were burned. On the contrary, there is strong evidence that British authorities did not wish to have property on Île St.-Jean destroyed, and that Rollo's soldiers did not burn buildings. Just as entrenched, yet erroneous, as the notion that houses, churches and other buildings were burned, is the assertion that British officials ordered that they be burned. This has proved fertile ground for the development of a mythology of ruthlessness concerning British treatment of those deported from Île St.-Jean. Casgrain, MacMillan and Blanchard have been instrumental in creating and propagating this image. It was reinforced in the 1960s by Blanchard who wrote that "in his orders to Lord Rollo, General Amherst stated that he would have the settlements in the different parts of the Island absolutely destroyed." This misstatement results from
confusion on two counts: confusion of Rollo with Whitmore and confusion of Île St.-Jean with Île Royale. In fact Amherst’s instructions to Rollo said nothing about burning or otherwise destroying buildings or settlements. This may be contrasted with instructions in 1758 to other British officers who were ordered to destroy settlements along the St. John River and at Miramichi, Bay of Chaleur and Gaspé — instructions which were executed.

Retrospective

Despite Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s depiction of Acadian life prior to the deportation as one of peace, bliss and self-sufficiency, such a characterization was far from the truth on Île St.-Jean during much of its 38 years as a French colony. The inhabitants succeeded in establishing a new settlement based primarily on agriculture, where they could raise their families, practice their religion and live as French subjects. At the same time they frequently experienced extreme hardship and even famine as a result of crop failures. They also had to contend with the political instability of the region, and could never rest assured that Île St.-Jean would provide the security they sought to lead peaceful lives of loyalty to the French king. Indeed, the population of Île St.-Jean came within a hair of being deported in the mid-1740s following the first fall of Louisbourg.

Their troubles culminated with the British occupation and orders for their deportation in 1758. Slightly less than one-third of the 4,700 residents reached France, a little more than a third lost their lives through drowning and disease on their way to France, and about one-third eluded their captors. By today’s terms the deportation was a harsh measure, but one cannot use 20th century ethics to judge events of almost two and a half centuries ago.

The toll of disease aboard the transports carrying the inhabitants of Île St.-Jean was appalling, yet comparable to that experienced by the Acadians deported in 1755. Moreover, such losses during long voyages at sea were not unusual, both in British vessels and French. One doctor wrote in the mid-18th century that “the number of seamen who died in time of war by shipwreck, capture, famine, fire or sword are but inconsiderable in respect to such as are destroyed by the ship diseases...” Twenty-two French naval vessels crossed from Louisbourg to Brest in the fall of 1757, and during the voyage of only three weeks, some 2,000 men died of typhus.

It is also important to bear in mind that deportation of the Acadians was not an unparalleled or unprecedented event, as portrayed by some writers. In the 1490s, for instance, Isabella and Ferdinand of Spain expelled their kingdom’s entire Jewish population — one that had been resident for over 500 years. The religious wars and persecution in France during the 16th and 17th centuries culminated in Louis XIV’s expulsion of approximately 400,000 Huguenots, which virtually wiped out Protestantism in that country. And any student modern of history will be well aware of the mass expulsions or “re-settling” of populations during the 20th century.

The Acadian deportation is a gloomy chapter in the history of Prince Edward Island. If any positive element can be discerned from the deportation experience, it is the role that it has played in fostering determination among its survivors — a determination to rebuild and overcome adversity. It is these qualities which have enabled the Acadians of Prince Edward Island to establish themselves as a vibrant community with a rich culture, contributing in full measure to the quality of life and economic prosperity of the Province.

Sources

This paper draws from a wide variety of primary sources, both British and French. Official records of the British Colonial Office, War Office and Admiralty, including the log of the Hind and the journal of Admiral Boscawen, have yielded much new information. Barrington’s Remarkable Voyages and Shipwrecks provided a detailed account of the Duke William’s transatlantic voyage. The Archives des Colonies, a subset of France’s Archives Nationales, have been useful - chiefly official correspondence sent from Louisbourg and Québec to Paris and correspondence emanating from the office of the French minister responsible for colonization. Valuable, also, are the compilations made by Rieder of information which resides in the Archives of the Port of Saint Servan, France, concerning the deportees who were embarked on the transports reaching St. Malo. De Roque’s census of Île St.-Jean taken in 1752 proved helpful.

A large number of secondary sources have been consulted and utilized, including such writers of Island history as D.C. Harvey, A.B. Warburton, J.C. MacMillan, H.-R. Casgrain, J.-H. Blanchard and Georges Arsenault. Similarly, the works of many historians writing on the Acadians generally, including Édouard Richard, Bona Arsenault and Naomi Griffiths, have contributed.

A much more detailed version of this article may be found in the Spring, 1998 issue of Acadiensis.
## ESTIMATE OF DEATHS ABOARD SHIP OF DEPORTEES FROM Île ST.-JEAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transport</th>
<th>Initial Complement of Passengers From Île St.-Jean</th>
<th>Death by Disease and Illness</th>
<th>Death by Drowning</th>
<th>Total Deaths at Sea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duke William</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violet</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruby</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John and Samuel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathias</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patience</td>
<td>1020</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restoration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yarmouth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamerlane</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Transports</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3100</td>
<td>970</td>
<td>679</td>
<td>1649</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: This compilation does not allow for the possibility that one of the “Other Transports” was wrecked on the coast of Spain with the loss of life by drowning. The *Mary* referred to above is the transport which received passengers from Île St.-Jean at Louisbourg.