

Fighting the American Revolution in Acadia, 1776-1778

This is my translation & expansion (updated 19 July 2021) of a short section of Vol. 3 of a history of the “Three Rivers” area, defined by the course of the Petitcodiac, Memramcook, and Shepody (Chipoudie) in southeastern New Brunswick, which empty into Shepody Bay, which opens in turn into the Cumberland Basin, an arm of the Bay of Fundy.

Surette, Paul (with collaborators). 1985. *Histoire des Trois-Rivières, Vol. III : 1763 à 1832, Le Grand Petcoudiac [sic]*. Dieppe, N-B : Ville de Dieppe.

BACKGROUND INTRODUCTION. *Acadians settlers from the Port Royal colony (Pierre Thibodeau and his sons, with Guillaume Blanchard and Pierre Gaudet, and probably some others) began joining their Mi'kmaw predecessors in this region at the very end of the 1600s.¹*

The salt marshes along the riverbanks, once dyked and drained, made superb farmland, just as they had elsewhere along the tidewater of the Bay of Fundy. By the time the British began their project of expelling the whole Acadian population in 1755, numerous villages occupied the region. (See the map entitled “Acadian Hamlets 1755,” on the next page.)

After the peace treaty of 1763, which officially ended the ban on Acadians, many families made their way back to these lands – which the British, however, had meantime granted to Protestant newcomers. Nonetheless, Acadians were permitted to resettle in many spots, but their status remained precarious for years. Many worked in subservience to the new landowners. New disruptions Also occurred with the influx of Loyalists (pro-British emigrés from the rebellious American colonies) in the 1780s.

In the prologue to this third volume of his regional history, Paul Surette summarizes the story up through the Expulsion. Then his first chapter covers the Acadian resettlement during the years 1763 up to 1775, that is, to the

beginning of the American Revolution. The second chapter deals with 1776 to 1789, a period of ongoing disruptions for the Acadians, stemming from the American Revolution itself.

*The following is **my translation of pp. 50-56** in chapter 2. This subsection covers the period of armed insurrection that Anglophones typically call the “**Eddy Rebellion**.” For the English-speaking rebels, it was an effort to extend the American Revolution to the more northerly Atlantic colonies of Britain (today’s Canadian Maritimes). But it also had a quality of **Acadian revolt against the British**, who had brought such havoc and misery upon them. That last aspect is what moved me to translate Surette’s account of the events. Reinforcing my motive is the fact that **the paternal grandfather of my father’s paternal grandfather – Mathurin DesRoches (alongside his elder brother Jean) – was a soldier in one of the rebel companies of 1776-1777**. Surette himself does not mention the DesRoches brothers, but I have folded in some information from an article by Stephen A. White, who gives a full and annotated list of the individual Acadian soldiers.²*

¹ See [https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chipoudie_\(Acadie\)](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chipoudie_(Acadie)), accessed Aug. 2016. website of Lucie LeBlanc Consentino

² Stephen A. White, 2002, “The Company of Frenchmen in the County of Cumberland, Province of Nova Scotia,” accessed Aug 2016, website of Lucie LeBlanc Consentino, <http://stephenwhite.acadian-home.org/american-revolution.html>.

“The Foolish War” 1776 to 1779

Great Britain’s army and navy had been carrying on the war against the French in America, ensuring the security of English colonists. So England thought it was only fair for those colonists to pay part of the costs of maintaining the troops, which is why the mother country imposed various taxes on them. But many English colonists refused to accept England’s right to do any such thing when the colonists themselves were not represented in the parliament that voted on these measures. One by one, Great Britain removed the taxes – except the levy on tea, which was left in place “on principle.” In 1773, a group of Bostonians protested by throwing huge cargos of English tea into the harbor. Finally, in 1775, the resisters – who called themselves “Patriots” – reached the point of firing on British soldiers. The next year, a small group of militants proclaimed the independence of the colonies. That meant war!

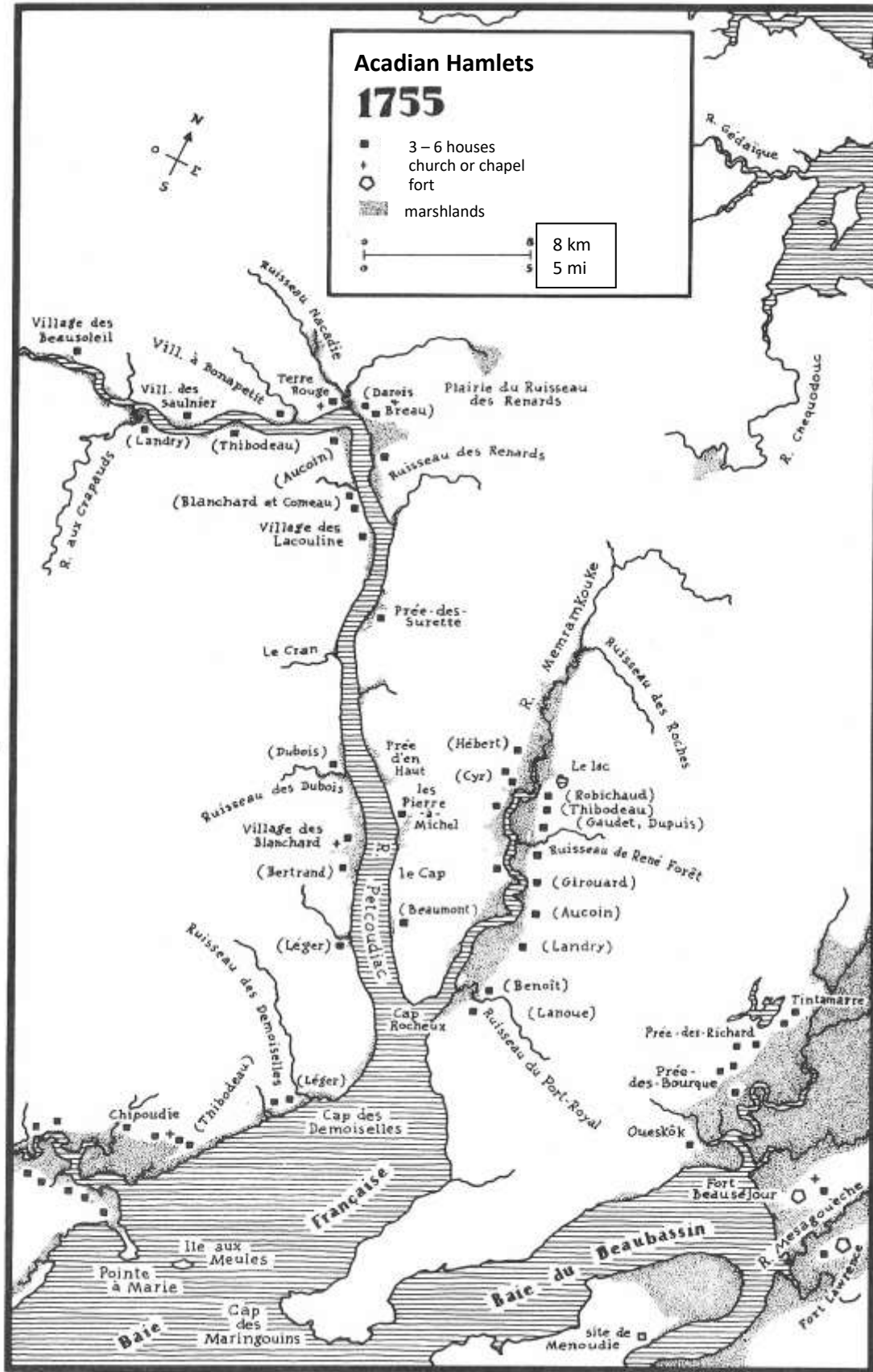
Acadia was still militarily vulnerable, thanks to its geographic layout, and its English settlements were quite new and not well developed. Great Britain was concentrating its forces to the south, where it was under attack. So most Anglophones in Acadia were reluctant to get involved in this conflict. They became “English neutrals,” just as the Acadians had earlier been “French neutrals.”

One region in particular, however, produced several Anglophones who espoused the cause of American liberty. This was Chignecto, which happened also to contain the largest concentration of Acadians – ironically, in the actual periphery of Fort Beauséjour.³ These Patriots included: Zebulon Rowe, Samuel Rogers, Josiah Throop, Jesse Converse, Robert Forster, and most notably, Jonathan Eddy and John Allan (son of William Allan, an earlier land-grantee of *Jolicœur* [Jolicure]).⁴ These men preached the ideas of the independence movement. They denounced Great Britain’s meddling, along with the repression inflicted on their like-minded friends to the south. They began to organize, forming the “Cumberland Committee.” They decided on a direct approach: they would attack the Halifax government in order to end its control of Acadia and place the country under the jurisdiction of the Continental Congress, the main body of the independence movement.

In the spring of 1776, Eddy traveled south to seek support of the Congress and to recruit troops. Allan continued preparations in Chignecto, trying to gain allegiance not only of Anglophones but also of Acadians and Native people.

³ (Except where indicated as Surette’s, all notes are the translator’s.) “**Chignecto**” is the rather narrow isthmus joining the Nova Scotian peninsula to the present-day province of New Brunswick. It is the locale of greater Beaubassin, a series of villages that comprised one of the major populations of Acadians before the Expulsion. France began building **Fort Beauséjour** in 1751, on the New Brunswick side of the present provincial border, to reassert and protect its claim to the land from there westward. The treaty of 1713, ceding Nova Scotia to Britain, had not clarified the boundary, and Britain disputed the French claim to this territory. A year earlier, in 1750, French agents had destroyed the homes of Acadians in the British Nova Scotian part of Beaubassin and forced the people to relocate as “refugees” to the French-held side. See Map 2 (http://www.ameriquefrancaise.org/fr/article-491/Beaubassin,_vestiges_de_l%E2%80%99Acadie_historique.html#.V7mzSPkrLcs - Ronnie-Gilles LeBlanc . Immediately after the British captured Fort Beauséjour in 1755 (which they renamed “**Fort Cumberland**”), they began implementing the scheme to expel all Acadians. See also note 14, below.

⁴ *Jolicœur*, anglicized as **Jolicure**, is now a farming community, just on the New Brunswick side of the provincial border with Nova Scotia (see Map 2). Route 16, from Aulac to the PEI Confederation Bridge, passes through here. It would have been on the important colonial-era river-and-portage crossing between the Bay of Fundy and Northumberland Strait (*la Mer Rouge*).



MAP 1

from p. 15 of
Surette

(English labels
overlaid by the
translator)

MONCTON & DIEPPE are at the right-angle of the Petitcodiac.

MEMRAMCOOK is now the whole area between the Petitcodiac & Memramcook rivers.

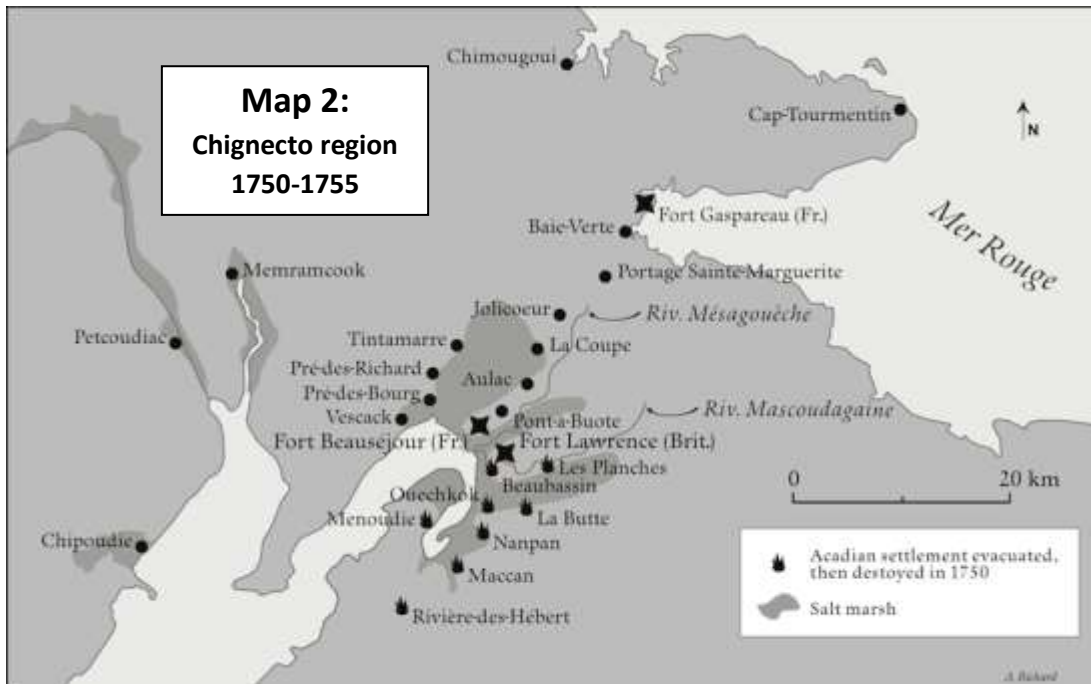
SACKVILLE is “Prée-des-Bourque” with **Westcock** (Oueskôk) south of it.

AMHERST (NS) is just off the right side of the map, near the bottom.

“R. Mesagouèche” in the lower-right corner is the **Missaguash River**, today’s provincial border between New Brunswick & Nova Scotia.

Meanwhile, the British were mobilizing to thwart this “subversion.” They sent agents to Chignecto, tracking the rebels and trying to persuade the people to stay loyal to the regime. Fort Beauséjour [Cumberland] was repaired and fortified. Its garrison was strengthened and command was assigned to Colonel Joseph Goreham, a proprietor of lands between the Petitcodiac and the Memramcook.⁵

Acadians now found themselves courted by the two opposing suitors. However, the spectacle of Englishmen fighting other Englishman struck them as suspect, even bizarre. Many Acadians characterized this conflict as a “crazy war” (*guerre folle*). Just the same, the majority of them did get involved in it – on the side of independence. This, in spite of warnings from the British agents and from their collaborators, the [French] missionaries. Several factors explain the Acadian choice.



First of all, Acadians hoped to remedy their circumstances, which they considered unjust and outrageous. It was essential not to miss this opportunity to put things right. Second, Acadians had always considered Great Britain as the enemy, and held that country responsible for most of the troubles they had endured. Third, rumor had it that France was secretly supporting the insurgents, which reawakened old Acadian hopes. And finally, there was the situation on the Allan estate at Jolicœur.

Eight of the dozen houses at Jolicœur belonged to Acadian families, whose young men had no choice but to go along with the proprietor, John Allan, who happened to be the main apostle and organizer of the independence cause. Isaïe à Pierre Boudreau⁶ became his right-hand man. Pierre à

⁵ **Joseph Goreham** had a complex military career, fighting the French and the Acadians. He spent several years in “**Goreham’s Rangers**,” led by his brother John. The Rangers were something of an elite force, gaining notoriety for search-and-destroy missions against Acadian resistance fighters in the period leading up to the start of the Expulsion in 1755 and in the years immediately following. The Goreham lands, in the present-day Memramcook area, amounted to some 20,000 acres (around 9000 hectares or 90 square km). (Accessed Aug. 2016 at http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/goreham_joseph_4E.html and http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/gorham_john_3E.html.)

⁶ The “à” means “belonging to,” thus “Isaïe à Pierre Boudreau” means that Isaïe Boudreau was the **son of** Pierre.

Joseph Caissie, Michel Bourque, Joseph Boudreau (Isaïe's brother), and Joseph-André LeBlanc helped with the propaganda. The Jolicœur Acadians also spread these ideas among their compatriots in other places.

Actually, most Acadians were still mistrustful, even skeptical, a bit put off by the odd nature of the conflict. Also, they had not forgotten how France had dashed their hopes in the past.⁷ So they took a very cautious approach to the situation. Nonetheless, the die was cast. The Acadians chose a side. At Jolicœur, Menoudie [Minudie],⁸ and Memramcook, they had signed the petition protesting the two laws of the Halifax Assembly [measures to raise militias and to pay the British military]. They joined in the work of spreading propaganda and preparing for the struggle.

Acadians of the Petitcodiac region were a bit more distant from Beauséjour and less often in touch with the core of the independence movement. Yet, here too, families harbored a lively resentment against Great Britain. Germain Thibodeau's is the best-known example. Deported to New England, where his parents died, Thibodeau was bitter toward England. And his Maillet step-children⁹ had grown up hearing the story of how British soldiers killed their father.¹⁰ Sure enough, the older Maillet brother, Jean-Baptiste, turned up among Allan's close followers. In September 1776 – with Isaïe Boudreau, “Gros Joseph” Caissie, and several others – this stepson of Germain Thibodeau conducted the independence leader to the Cocagne River.¹¹ Allan met there with a gathering of several Mi'kmaw leaders. As for the other families of the Petitcodiac area, most were equally pro-independence.

⁷ France went through long periods of lukewarm support for the Acadians. In some other periods, the mother country was too strapped by military and financial crisis to help out much. France failed to retake Acadia after the final British conquest there in the early 1700s, despite its consequent founding of the heavily funded town and fortress at Louisbourg. (Note that “Acadia” excluded Cape Breton and Prince Edward Island, which remained French, with one interruption, until 1758.) France suffered severe losses in the Seven Years War of 1754-1763 (called the French and Indian War in the USA), which ended with complete and permanent British takeover of French North America. Early in the conflict, however, France did undertake one massive but disastrous project, the so-called d'Anville Expedition: in 1746, after New Englanders had captured Louisbourg the first time, a huge French fleet of warships, transports, and troops set out to retake Cape Breton and perhaps Acadia, but delays, disease, and severely adverse weather scuttled the whole thing. Hence the incapacity of France to stave off the devastating Expulsion in that period.

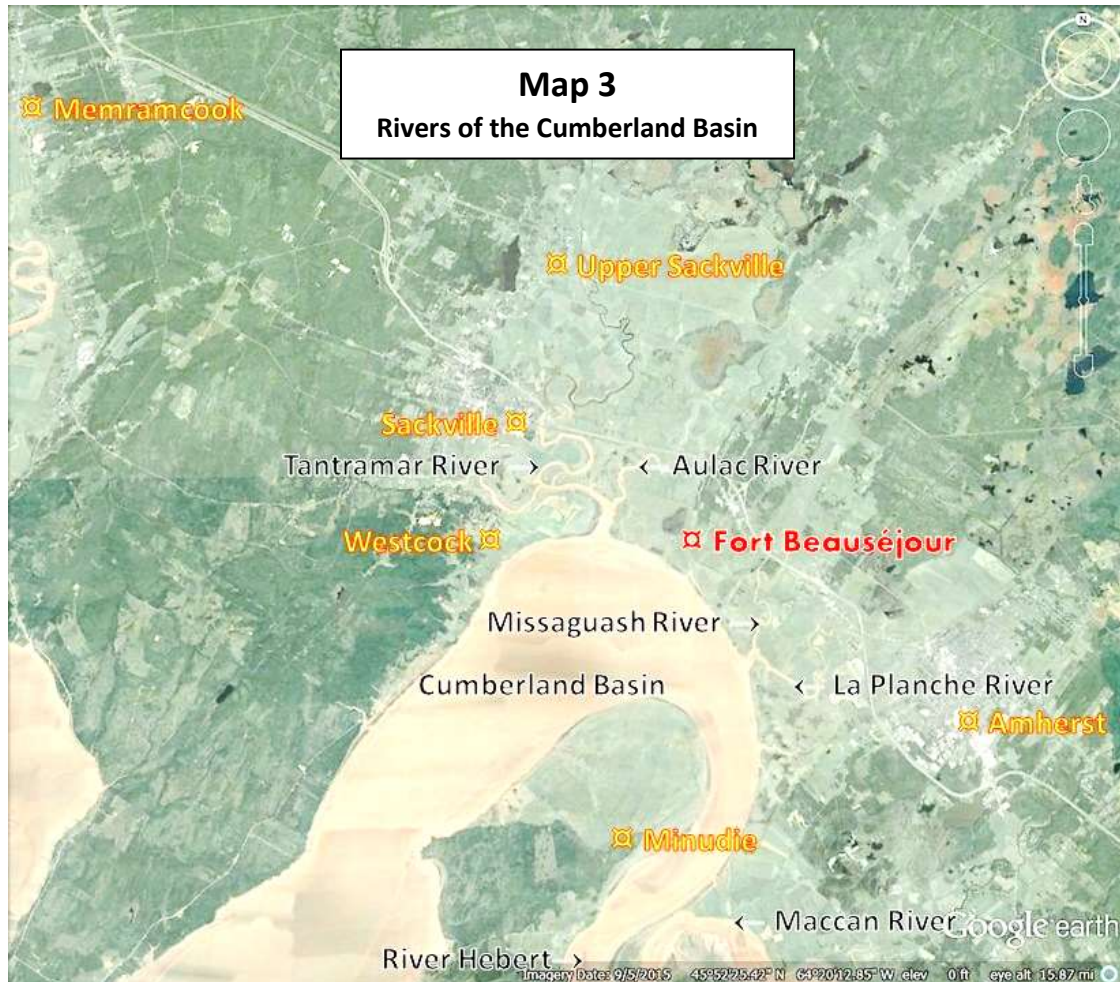
⁸ **Menoudie**, like Memramcook and Petitcodiac, was a rare spot where post-Expulsion Acadians were able to resettle at salt marshes. See its location (near Maccan and Nappan in Nova Scotia and the extinct settlement once called Franklin Manor) toward the bottom of both Maps 1 and 2. Today the actual site is almost depopulated, though still farmed. For a time in the 18th century, it was called Elysian Fields. The Acadians were evicted from Menoudie by its British grantees (Desbarres family?) at the beginning of the 1800s. They resettled in southeastern New Brunswick. (See <http://www.acadian-home.org/menoudie.html>, website of Lucie LeBlanc Consentino.)

⁹ These were children of **Marie Babineau** with her first husband, **Charles Maillet**: Jean-Baptiste and Marguerite (b. 1753 and 1755 at “Petitcodiac”) and Charles “Charlitte” (b. around 1757, place unspecified) (<http://mwlandry.ca/genealog/getperson.php?personID=I2575&tree=03>). Widowed herself, she married widower **Germain Thibodeau** in about 1767 (<http://mwlandry.ca/genealog/getperson.php?personID=I1757&tree=03>). With his first wife, Madeleine Blanche Préjean, Thibodeau had had five children, born in exile in New England, and this couple returned to Acadia in 1763. (Note that the M.W. Landry genealogy site gives the erroneous impression that at least the last four children were born at Halifax from 1759 to 1763.)

¹⁰ Charles Maillet Sr.: shot in late summer **1756** (<http://mwlandry.ca/genealog/getperson.php?personID=I1791&tree=03>).

¹¹ The **Cocagne River** empties into the Northumberland Strait on the southeast coast of New Brunswick, roughly 40 km north of Moncton or 50 km from Memramcook. The area of Cocagne had been, for a time, a haven for Acadian refugees in the early years of the Expulsion.

But at summer's end, the insurrection had achieved much less progress than its promoters and sympathizers had hoped. Eddy had failed to gain the full support of the Continental Congress. And his recruitment efforts had got him only a few meager troops from the Machias region [of coastal Maine], and some from Passamaquoddy. He reached the Saint John River with these men at the end of August [1776]. Able to sign up only a few Anglophones and natives there, he extended his stay.¹²



At Chignecto, the independence activists waited anxiously for him to arrive. They were growing impatient. Besides that, Allan had no sooner got back from Cocagne than he found out Halifax had ordered his arrest. He fled south [to New England].

Only at the beginning of November did Eddy and his little army reach Chignecto. They landed at Chipoudie [Shepody], where they captured a detachment from Beauséjour [Fort Cumberland] that was out on reconnaissance. As soon as word got out that the rebels had turned up, many of the Anglophones loyal to Great Britain took refuge in the fort. These included the Yorkshire English of the

¹² White summarizes the early phase of the process this way: “Early in the summer of 1776 Eddy went to Boston to submit Allan’s plan to the Massachusetts General Court. The latter approved it and appointed Eddy a lieutenant colonel, authorizing him to secure eight schooners and sloops for transportation and to raise a force of 3000 men. Unfortunately, Eddy only managed to recruit about 200 volunteers, at Machias and Passamaquoddy in what is now Maine and at Maugerville in what is now New Brunswick. Twenty Indians also joined the force.”

Petitcodiac, mainly from the Village-des-Allemands [Hillsborough].¹³ Keillor, a settler at Prée-d'en Bas on the east bank, also abandoned his place.



Cannons at Fort Beauséjour in 2015, pointing across the marshlands toward the Missaguash River (Photo by the translator 10 Sept 2015)

Eddy, meanwhile, arrived at Memramcook, where Acadians from all around the region were waiting for him. They were disappointed to see such a tiny army, but they joined up just the same. Eddy assured them that reinforcements would come.

Crossing the portage, the independence troops reached Westcock (*Vesack*, *Oueskôk*) and then Tintamarre (now Upper Sackville),¹⁴ where they picked up some Anglophone sympathizers. On the Aulac River, Eddy seized a schooner. He and some of his men used it to cross to the opposite bank, near Fort Beauséjour. There they came across another schooner, guarded by a detachment of soldiers. Eddy and his patriots captured it. They hid in the two boats until morning, then surprised a patrol on its rounds and took the men prisoner. Despite cannon fire, they made their way beyond the fort and got to the south bank of the Missaguash. Eddy's other men had found their way to the same spot, along with some Anglophone and Acadian sympathizers from Jolicœur, La Butte,¹⁵ and Menoudie. The rebels' munitions were stored in the barns of Jolicœur residents. The independence camp at Missaguash now numbered some 200 men.

¹³ **Village-aux-Allemands**, now Hillsborough, was previously and alternatively known as **Village-des-Blanchard** (see Map 1) and **Petcoudiac** (variously spelled; see Map 2 and note 27 below). This village was the site of a battle during the earliest months of the Expulsion, when Acadian and Native resistance fighters (led by French militia commander Charles Deschamps de Boishébert) attacked and drove off the British forces who were destroying Acadian properties and rounding up the people. In this so-called **Battle of the Petitcodiac**, on 2 September 1755, 22 British men died. The six wounded soldiers included Ranger Joseph Goreham (see note 5, above), who was to take command of Fort Cumberland (Beauséjour) during the Eddy Rebellion (accessed Aug 2016 at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Petitcodiac).

¹⁴ **Westcock**, to the colonial French, had various spellings, such as **Oueskôk** (Map 1) and **Vesack** (Map 2). **Upper Sackville** (NB) is the current name of the colonial village of **Tintamarre**. The anglicized version of that word is "**Tantramar**," a label that now applies both to the river and to the marshes in the vicinity of Sackville town. The **Missaguash River** (**Rivière Mésagouèche**) marks today's provincial boundary between New Brunswick and Nova Scotia – and was, in fact, the dividing line between British-held Acadia (or Nova Scotia) and the territory France claimed as their remaining part of Acadia (between the treaties of 1713 and 1763). See also note 3, above.

¹⁵ I cannot determine whether **La Butte** refers to today's Point de Bute (Pont-à-Buot, about six or seven km from Fort Beauséjour, along the route to Jolicure) or nearby Butte à Roger or the locale marked as "La Butte" on Map 2 (West Amherst or Upper Nappan?).

During the following several days, Eddy developed a strategy for bringing down the fort and supervised the preparations. On the 14th, he ordered Goreham to surrender, urging him to avoid bloodshed. Goreham politely responded by asking Eddy to surrender instead. The Patriots then launched an assault on the fort. Thanks to the considerable improvements made to the fort, the British side prevailed and the besieging force had to withdraw.

This was the first defeat. Psychologically, it did not bode well for the independence cause. The reinforcements from the south, moreover, had still not appeared, and the weather was getting colder. For many of the fathers among the men, further action seemed too risky. They left for home. Only about 80 soldiers remained in the independence army, mostly young men, about a quarter of whom were Acadian, and several were Native.

Telescopic view of the ruins of Fort Beauséjour in 2016, from the present-day dyke of the Westcock marshland, across the joint estuary of the Tantramar & Aulac rivers. The ruins are visible along the crest of the hill to the left of the museum building. (Photo by the translator 9 Aug 2016)



Insisting that reinforcements would turn up at any moment, Eddy announced that the siege must continue, but they had

to organize better. Four companies were formed. One of these, comprising over 20 men and grouping together most of the Acadians, was placed under the command of Isaïe Boudreau. The lieutenants were Pierre Caissie and Louis-Frédéric à Moïse DelesDerniers.¹⁶ Jean-Baptiste Maillet from Le Coude [Dieppe, New Brunswick] was one of the sergeants. The ordinary soldiers [at rank of private]¹⁷ included some close relatives of the latter: his brother Charles [Maillet]; his 17-year-old half-brother Isaac [Thibodeau] ...; and his brother-in-law Joseph à Joseph Léger, who had just married his sister Marguerite [Maillet]. Other privates included the 17-year-old stepson of Jacques Dubois, Michel [Gauvin] à Jacques-Roch Gauvin.¹⁸ The other young men came from Memramcook, Jolicœur, and Menoudie.

At Eddy's instigation, the greatly reduced independence forces took up the siege again. For more than two weeks, they waited impatiently for the promised reinforcements.

¹⁶ Although DelesDerniers was a member of Boudreau's company, White does not include him as an Acadian, noting that "Louis-Frédéric Delesdernier ... [was] the son of Moïse Delesdernier, a Calvinist who had been brought to Nova Scotia by the British in 1751."

¹⁷ (Note by Surette.) Their average age was 22.

¹⁸ Michel's parents were Marguerite Guay dit "Castonguay" and Jacques-Roch Gauvin. The widowed Marguerite married Jacques Dubois in 1767 (<http://mwlandry.ca/genealog/getperson.php?personID=I18390&tree=03>).

On the 27th, fresh troops did arrive. Unfortunately for the Patriots, the 400 new soldiers were British, who had come from Piguit [or Pisiguit: Windsor area, Nova Scotia] to augment Goreham's army. Despite their highly disadvantaged situation, the insurgents kept up the siege.

British Redcoats (popularly known among the Acadians during the Expulsion as "**les goddams**," seemingly from an expression often overheard)¹⁹

During the night of November 30 and December 1, 200 British soldiers left the fort and ambushed the rebel camp. Surprised by an adversary twice their size, the young men of the revolutionary side tried to hold their position, but finally had to disperse. Some were killed.²⁰



Having the complete upper hand, the British set about reprisals. They attacked the Jolicœur area, from which most inhabitants had already fled. After destroying the rebels' weaponry, they burned the barns. They also set fire to the dozen houses in the place, eight of which had belonged to Acadian families.

Meanwhile, the independence army was able to regroup. Several men had left the ranks after the British attack. One example of these was the young Michel Gauvin from Petitcodiac. By contrast, 13 other Acadians²¹ stayed with Isaïe Boudreau in the company: for instance, the son and stepsons of Germain Thibodeau. But the principal Patriot leaders accepted the fact that nothing more could be achieved in the region, and withdrew the force southward.

They retreated up the Petitcodiac, then crossed over to the Saint John River. The furious Patriots inflicted their own reprisals by burning homes of British partisans, first around Village-des-Allemands [Hillsborough] and then at Fourche-aux-Crapauds [Coverdale].²² The Thibodeau and Maillet sons saw themselves as meting out justice – even though they destroyed homes built by their own relatives and neighbors. When they reached the Saint John River, the troops stopped for only a short while before

¹⁹ Downloaded Aug 2016 with permission from <http://www.crcath.pvt.k12.ia.us/lasalle/Resources/8th%20Rev%20War%20Websites/Jack%20Nolan%20Skeeter%20rev%20war/Rev%20War%20Skeeter%20Jasper/images/redcoats.jpg>

²⁰ (Surette.) This was undoubtedly the case for Joseph, only son of Jean-Baptiste dit "Varouel" Gaudet from Memramcook. [Translator: (1) "Varouel" is likely a variant of "variole" or "vérole," meaning "pox." (2) White says, however, that "according to his great-grandnephew Placide Gaudet..., Joseph drowned when he was twenty years old, apparently shortly after the end of his term of military service." Of the 18 other Acadians that White documents in Isaïe Boudreau's company, all apparently survived well past the end of the conflict. The fatalities, then, did not occur within this "Company of Frenchmen."]

²¹ Surette includes Louis-Frédéric DelesDerniers, whom White excludes (see note 2 and the list on p. 12, below), saying the *Acadians* who stayed the full three months numbered 12 in addition to leader Isaïe Boudreau.

²² Fourche-aux-Crapauds [meaning "Toads Fork"] was on the Petitcodiac where the Rivière aux Crapauds flows in, just upriver from today's Moncton, at Coverdale. See Map 1 for the Rivière aux Crapauds, now called Turtle Creek.

retreating to Machias [Maine]. Eddy was hoping to find support there, including the men he needed to launch a second attack.



Inside Fort Beauséjour 2016 (photo by the translator 10 Sept 2015)

Meanwhile, in the Three Rivers region, the young men who had just left the ranks of the independence army had to hide in the forest or, at least, take refuge with relatives living further from Beauséjour – whether at Memramcook, Petitcodiac, or on the coast. The displaced people of Jolicœur, likewise, had to find somewhere to resettle. Most anxious of all were the mothers whose sons had had to go south into exile. That was the circumstance of Marie Babineau (wife of Germain Thibodeau) at Le Coude, for instance: three of her sons had fled with the revolutionaries.

Fortunately, the British were taking no more reprisals. Knowing that a great proportion of the population of Chignecto – Anglophone as well as Acadian – were sympathetic to the independence cause, Goreham adopted a wiser policy: to offer clemency. On December 4 he issued a proclamation: any rebel who surrendered now and took the oath of allegiance to Great Britain’s king would be pardoned. Some Acadians did actually surrender and recommit themselves to the oath. Later, at the beginning of January [1777], Goreham published a warning: those who did not submit within the next few days had to expect to be hunted down.

In the southern colonies, Eddy continued to clamor for aid and materials to launch a second expedition against [the government of] Halifax. Belatedly learning of the defeat suffered at Beauséjour, John Allan came to help out. But the two men had little success. By [mid-]February, in fact, even the soldiers of Isaïe Boudreau’s company were discharged. They were very worried about the fate that the British had in store for their families. Most of these Acadian quietly left for their home country. Their relatives welcomed them warmly, but they had to stay in hiding for a time.

Among the young combatants, a strong camaraderie had developed. This seems to be manifested by two families from Jolicœur who settled on the Petitcodiac: those of Pierre “Pierre le Grand” Boudreau and his nephew Joseph-André LeBlanc. After their homes had been burned, these families – with some others – took refuge with relatives in Memramcook. The two families were each celebrating the return of an exiled son: Private Paul LeBlanc was the son of Joseph-André, while Private Joseph Boudreau was Pierre’s.^{23,24} Although the two families were not closely related, they decided to resettle as neighbors on the Petitcodiac. This would position them [in greater safety] further from Beaubassin. But it seems their choice was motivated primarily by the wishes of their newly returned sons to live at Le Coude close to some of their other comrades from combat: namely, Germain Thibodeau’s son [Isaac] and stepsons [Jean-Baptiste and Charles “Charlitte” Maillet].



Section of an Acadian aboiteau of 1722, showing the gate that blocked the incoming tide

(Photo by the translator 27 July 2016 at the museum of the Colchester Historeum; small section of an aboiteau excavated on the Salmon River, Truro area, Nova Scotia, in 2004.)

So the Boudreau and LeBlanc families put down roots on the high point of land that reached almost to the river, on the south side of the Great Marsh of Le Coude. Today the area is known as Chartersville [within the city of Dieppe in the Greater Moncton area]. They set about dyking the southern part of this marsh. Collaborating with other families of Le Coude, they built an *aboiteau*²⁵ upstream on the Des Cochons brook. (The new settlement later acquired the name of Village-des-LeBlanc.²⁶ Over time, this hamlet and that of Le Coude (Dieppe) together took on the name of Petitcodiac, which formerly pertained to the cluster of

²³ (Surette.) Isaïe, one of Pierre Boudreau’s other sons [and the company captain], was so involved with the revolutionaries that his return would have led to immediate arrest.

²⁴ Pierre “le Grand” Boudreau was father of Capt. Isaïe Boudreau (see #1 in the table of White’s sketches) by his first wife, Madeleine Melanson, and father of Pte. Joseph Boudreau (#16) by his second wife, Madeleine Belliveau. Pierre’s sister Madeleine Boudreau married Claude-André LeBlanc. The son of the latter couple, Joseph-André LeBlanc, was the father of Pte. Paul LeBlanc. Paul LeBlanc’s mother, Marie dite “Bidâque” Doiron was the sister of Pte. Louis dit “Louison” Doiron dit Gould.

²⁵ An *aboiteau* is a simple but vital technology that was the pivot of Acadian prosperity before the Expulsion, and one that remained useful for the small fraction of post-Expulsion Acadians lucky enough to regain marshlands to farm. The tides around the Bay of Fundy are extreme in height, speed, and force. The mud in the marshes is rich in nutrients. Acadians worked mightily, in communal teams, to build and maintain dykes and reclaim this rich land for crops. They had a unique drainage system using *aboiteaux* – wooden conduits placed through the dyke, from the marsh to the waterside. Within each conduit was a gate or flap that opened when the tide receded, allowing salty water (and excess rain) to flow outward. But a rising tide slammed the flap shut against inflow. After two or three years of rain and draining, the land was ready for planting. Also see photo at the end of this article.

²⁶ (Surette.) The houses were located at the edge of the marsh between the present-day Jewish cemetery and Beaubassin Street. For reasons which will be mentioned below [beyond the end of this translated piece], part of the milieu remained wooded. The Charters [sic; land grants?] were put in place only 33 years later.

In "The Company of Frenchmen," White sketches all 19 of the Acadian men (there were three others besides). Most of the 19 served the full term of **three months (14 Nov 1776 to 14 Feb 1777)**. Five men, marked with an asterisk (*) left after **15 days**, in the wake of the failed assault on Ft. Beauséjour (Cumberland). Rates of monthly pay: captain £12, lieutenant £8.1, sergeant; corporal £2.2; private £2. The word "dit" indicates a *nickname*.

	Name & rank	Marriage (children)	Notes
1	Capt. Isaïe Boudreau	none	No known marriage. Half-brother of Joseph Boudreau #16. First cousin of father of Paul LeBlanc #17.
2	*Lt. Pierre Caissie	c. 1777 (8)	His future wife was the half-sister of Joseph Léger #8.
3	Sgt. Jean-Baptiste Maillet	c. 1779 (10)	Older brother of "Charlitte" Maillet #9; half-brother of Isaac Thibodeau #18.
4	*Sgt. Pierre LeBlanc	c. 1779 (12)	Future brother-in-law of Benjamin Allain #6.
5	*Cpl. Michel Bourg	1777 (11)	
6	*Cpl. Benjamin Allain	c. 1778 (4)	Future brother-in-law of Pierre LeBlanc #4.
7	Pte. Mathurin Gaudet	none	Never married but died old. Older brother of Jean #12.
8	Pte. Joseph Léger	c. 1778 (9)	His future wife was the sister of Joseph Gaudet #19. His half-sister later married Pierre Caissie #2.
9	Pte. Charles "Charlitte" Maillet	c. 1782 (10)	Younger brother of J-B Maillet #3; half-brother of Isaac Thibodeau #18.
10	Pte. Jean DesRoches	c. 1778 (10)	Older brother of Mathurin DesRoches #11. Future brother-in-law of Joseph Bastarache #13.
11	Pte. Mathurin DesRoches	c. 1780 (4)	Younger brother of Jean DesRoches #10.
12	Pte. Jean "Jean Pierrotte" Gaudet	c. 1780 (9)	Younger brother of Mathurin #7.
13	Pte. Joseph Bastarache	c. 1778 (12)	Brother of the future wife of Jean DesRoches #10.
14	*Pte. Michel Gauvin	c. 1787 (9)	Originally from Québec. His widowed mother remarried, to an Acadian. His future wife was the young & widowed step-mother of the future wife of "Charlitte" Maillet #9.
15	*Pte. Louis "Louison" Doiron dit Gould	3rd 1777 (11)	Three marriages. Uncle of Paul LeBlanc #17 (Louison's sister was Paul's mother.)
16	Pte. Joseph Boudreau	c. 1782 (8)	Half-brother of Isaïe Boudreau #1. First cousin of father of Paul LeBlanc #17.
17	Pte. Paul LeBlanc	c. 1781 (5)	Nephew of "Louison" Doiron dit Gould #15 (Paul's mother was sister of Louison). Paul's father was 1 st cousin of Isaïe & Joseph Boudreau #1 & 16,
18	Pte. Joseph-Isaac Thibodeau	c. 1782 (10)	Half-brother of J-B and "Charlitte" Maillet #3 & 9.
19	Pte. Joseph Gaudet	none	His sister later married Joseph Léger #8.

villages downstream from there. The village of Le Coude then came to be called the Village-d'en-Haut [meaning "the Upper Village"], because it was above the Village-des-LeBlanc.)²⁷

Friendship between combat veterans and kinship links brought two other Acadians to Petitcodiac. Soon after returning from exile, Joseph dit [nicknamed] "le Petite Houppe," son of Joseph dit "Fluxan" Léger, left his farm – adjacent to his family's at Menoudie – and settled at Le Coude. He established himself close to his brothers-in-law and fellow-veterans Jean-Baptiste and Charles "Charlitte" Maillet.²⁸ A little later, his brother-in-law Sylvain à Jean Babineau likewise left Menoudie for Le Coude. Jean Babineau was the brother-in-law of pioneering colonists of the place, Germain Thibodeau and Joseph Surette.²⁹

In well-informed British circles, the Petitcodiac had become known as a nest of rebels. In fact, regardless of their defeats, many Acadians had given up neither their hope of rectifying their circumstances nor their combative attitudes. But considering the tepid interest and assistance that the southern revolutionaries gave to Acadia, the situation was not promising.

John Allan's efforts, all the same, did achieve a bit of additional success. He was named a colonel and assigned as liaison officer between the Congress and the Eastern Natives. With a small troop – which included Isaïe Boudreau – Allan arrived at the Saint John River at the very beginning of June in 1777. These operations were supposed to be a prelude to another insurrection. Some Acadians of the region came to help. He met with the Native tribes, in hopes of their continued support for the independence cause, and he did capture some British agents.

But at the end of the month, Halifax had heard about these activities and sent a sizable force out from Fort Frederick at the mouth of the river [today's city of Saint John, New Brunswick]. These soldiers quickly discovered how tiny the number of rebels actually was. Allan fled to safety, first among Natives of Oromocto, then south to New England. The second attempt at insurrection had likewise ended in defeat.

At the beginning of 1778, however, France switched its secret support of the Revolution to an overt alliance, signing a military treaty with the revolutionary Congress and declaring war on Great Britain.

²⁷ **Petitcodiac** is now the standard English spelling. The word has a varied history, both in its spelling (e.g., *Petcodiac*) and in its geographical location. It has identified the river throughout the piece, but it has been transposed from one *community* to another, up that river. First, Petitcodiac stood for Acadians settlements along the west bank of the river below the great right-angle bend, including today's Hillsborough (which also was named *Village-des-Blanchard* and *Village-des-Allemands* at different times). But then the Petitcodiac label moved roughly 25 km up to the present-day Dieppe, at that bend in the river (known before that as *Le Coude*, meaning "the elbow" or simply "river bend"). Finally, today's Petitcodiac village is found another 48 km further upriver.

²⁸ Around 1775, **Joseph Léger** married Marguerite Maillet, sister of Jean-Baptiste and "Charlitte" Maillet. See the next note for additional strands in the web of kinship.

²⁹ These complex relationships occurred primarily, through **three Babineau siblings: Marie, Sylvain, and Isabelle**. **(1) Marie Babineau** first married Charles Maillet Sr., and her children were J-Baptiste, Charles Jr. "Charlitte," and Marguerite Maillet; then her second marriage was to **Germain Thibodeau**. **(2)** Around 1777, **Sylvain Babineau** married his first wife, **Marguerite Léger**, daughter of Joseph "La P'tite Houppe" Léger and of the **Marguerite Maillet** just mentioned (daughter of Marie Babineau). **(3)** About 1761, **Isabelle Babineau** married the **Joseph Surette** named in the text as a co-founder of the Petitcodiac settlement, alongside Germain Thibodeau. (And incidentally, around 1780, the widowed Isabelle Babineau would marry Firmin Grégoire Thibodeau, son of a sister of that same Germain Thibodeau.)

France sent troops to America. The French commander-in-chief, Count d'Estaing, issued a proclamation to the French of North America, both Québécois and Acadian, urging them to back the independence efforts by joining their French brothers to fight Great Britain.

In March [1778], Allan sent John Starr to Acadia as a spy. His orders were to read this proclamation to the Acadians and to report on the state of the British forces. Starr arrived at the end of the month. At Memramcook, he met with Acadians, including some from Petitcodiac and Menoudie. He read them the letter from d'Estaing. This allayed the skepticism that several were harboring, and reactivated their longstanding hopes for greater justice. They all declared themselves ready to fight. Some men had British certificates showing they had taken the oath of allegiance; however, they tore up the documents and burned them. The Acadians then set about waiting, but no expeditionary force showed up from the south that year, nor the next.

This disappointment echoed the people's disillusionment over France's inability, after the Treaty of Paris [1763], either to repatriate them or even to protect the compatriots on its own territory. Meanwhile, the missionary priests were calling down the wrath of heaven upon all revolutionaries. These influences, reinforced by their own good sense, persuaded the Acadians to rededicate their energy toward finishing the huge job of reconstruction, which they had been obliged to restart several times, and which the war had interrupted.



Stream emptying through the marshlands into the east side of the Petitcodiac River (view downstream), near Beaumont in Memramcook (Photo by the translator, 9 Aug 2016)