

P.O. Box 100,
Antigonish, N.S.
October 19, 1954

Mr. Thomas H. Raddall,
Liverpool, N. S.

Dear Mr. Raddall,

Your recent story-article on the Expulsion of the Acadians was most interesting and informative.

As a student of American history (I have my M.A. from Boston College and I am working on my Ph.D.) I have had several discussions on the subject of the Expulsion with my American professors. We were aware of the ill-treatment received by the Acadians who fled to the New England States but we were unaware of the facts which you contend happened in the Annapolis Valley of Nova Scotia.

If you are not too busy, Mr. Raddall, could you have your secretary let me know your documentation for the following points and where such documentation could be found:

(1) The fact that His Majesty's New England Colonial Troops (Bluecoats) took the largest part in the Expulsion.

(2) The fact that His Majesty's British Regulars (Redcoats) took little or no part in the actual Expulsion.

(3) The fact that the Expulsion was primarily the brain-child of the Governor of Massachusetts and only incidentally that of the Governor at Halifax.

(4) The fact that a formal condemnation of the proposition, by His Majesty's Government, was on its way across the Atlantic at the actual time of the Expulsion.

Thanking you, Mr. Raddall, for what I know will be your cooperation.

Yours Very truly,

Murdoch MacDonal
Murdoch MacDonald

October 21st, 1954

Mr. Murdoch-MacDonald,
P.O.Box 100,
Antigonish, N.S.

Dear Mr. MacDonald,

Before writing my story "The Credit Shall Be Yours" I went to the Provincial Archives at Halifax and got the Assistant Archivist, Doctor Bruce Fergusson, to dig out everything pertaining to the expulsion of the Acadians from the Annapolis Valley. I regret that I did not bring away a documentary list, my interest being in the facts themselves. However, a letter to Dr. Fergusson, or better still a visit to the Archives, would give you an exact documentation. Amongst other sources I recall (a) letters of Governor Shirley of Massachusetts to Lord Newcastle, setting forth the viewpoint of the American colonists and urging the removal of the Acadians; (b) letters between Shirley and Governor Lawrence at Halifax; (c) letters and orders from Lawrence to Colonel Winslow, commanding the American troops at Beausejour and later in the Annapolis Valley; (d) orders from Lawrence to Major Handfield, commanding the company of English regulars at Fort Anne; (e) the Journal of Colonel Winslow, in which he sets forth in detail his operations in the expulsion of the Acadians from Grand Pre and other settlements at the eastern end of the Annapolis Valley; (f) the Journal of Captain John Knox, whose company of English regulars in 1757 relieved the garrison of Fort Anne, which had been stationed there so many years; and who describes the situation still existing there, i.e. the fact that many of the old garrison had married Acadian wives, that Major Handfield and other officials were married to daughters of Madame Marie Magdalen Maisonat Winniett, and that Madame Winniett had for years exerted the most powerful influence over the fort and garrison.

A copy of the letter from London disapproving the expulsion (which was actually crossing the sea when the expulsion was carried out) is also in the Archives. I do not recall the volume, but Dr. Fergusson or any of the Archives staff can produce it for you.

The American historian Francis Parkman covers much of this in Volume 2 of his "A Half Century Of Conflict", including the slaughter of Colonel Noble's American soldiers at Grand Pre in 1747, which caused much of the New Englanders' bitterness towards the Acadians. In the appendices to this volume he also quotes typical letters from Governor Shirley. Volume 1 of his "Montcalm and Wolfe" gives detail of the capture of Fort Beausejour by a force of New Englanders and the use of these troops in carrying out the expulsion afterwards. A study of the disposal of the forces in Nova Scotia in 1755 (available at the Archives) will confirm my statement that the only troops in the Annapolis Valley itself at the time of the expulsion were Winslow's Americans and the small company of the 40th Foot at Fort Anne.

Major Handfield's deliberate delays and excuses are apparent in his brief replies to Lawrence's demands. He thus held off the expulsion from the Annapolis River several months, during which time many

Acadian families in that region were able to slip away into the woods and wait until the thing had blown over. Professor Belliveau, of Saint Anne's College at Church Point, informs me that many of the Acadian people now living on what is called the French Shore, between Digby and Yarmouth, are descended from Acadians who thus escaped the expulsion. The Survey of Titus Smith (available at the Archives) gives some interesting detail of camps in the woods, some of them quite large and apparently occupied for a considerable time, the traces of which were still visible in 1800-1801.

Sincerely,