

TRACES OF EARLY FRENCH IN QUEENS COUNTY AND ADJACENT PARTS OF NOVA SCOTIA

One of the many mysteries in the history of Nova Scotia is that of the early French influence which existed along the ~~eastern~~ coast from Canso to Cape Sable long before there was any English settlement. The story of the French in Cape Breton and about the Canso region is known to some extent, and so is the story of the La Tours and other French about Cape Sable; but there is little or no knowledge about the long stretch between. (Lahave; Petite Riviere; Port

The French settlement at Lahave has been recorded; otherwise French chroniclers have little to say, except to mention from time to time the existence of a few French on the seaward face of the peninsula. In Queens County there are traces, and that is all. (These names remain in use today, with an English

How early the French and Basques came to Nova Scotia it is impossible to say. (Champlain says that Bretons and Normans first came to Newfoundland and the adjacent fishing banks in 1504.) The existence of the name Baccaro (from the Basque word baccalaos, meaning codfish) near Cape Sable shows that Basque fishermen knew and used this part of the coast at a very early date. They were here before the French, and were still actively engaged in the fishery and the Indian trade on the coast when DeMonts and Champlain made their first voyage to "Acadie". (In order to catch the salmon and herring which came throughing

At that time, 1604, the coasts of Acadie were well known to the Norman, Breton and Biscayan French fishermen who had followed the Basques. The long contact of the Basques with the Indians was evident in the language of the savages. The chronicler of Port Royal, Lescarbot, records that he found the savages using Basque words and phrases freely in their speech. Near Canso, DeMonts ~~had~~ found an old fisherman named Savalet who had been coming to this coast for 42 consecutive summers. (Until the coming of white traders they merely

It has always been assumed (from the congenial experience of the French at Port Royal) that they got along well with the savages in Acadie from the

beginning. But ~~says~~ Champlain attests that ^{some} ~~the~~ islands of Mahone Bay were known already in his time as "The Martyrs", because of some Frenchmen killed there by the Indians. There is evidence of at least one similar tragedy on the Queens County coast in the early French times.

DeMonts and Champlain named several places along the south shore of Nova Scotia; but some had been named by their Basque and French predecessors. For example, "Cesambre" (Sambro); "The Martyrs": "Baccaro." By the year 1605 the whole south shore had a French nomenclature: "Le Heve" (Lahave); Petite Riviere; Port Maltois (Port Medway); Port du Rossignol (Liverpool); Port Mouton; Ile aux Cannes (Port Mouton Island); Port Joli; Port l'Hebert; Riviere des Sables (Sable River); Port Razoir (Shelburne); Cap Negro; Baccaro; Port Latour; Cap des Sables (Cape Sable), etc. Many of these names remain in use today, with an English twist in the pronunciation, *and spelling.*

On May 6, 1604, DeMonts found a Frenchman named Rossignol trading with the Indians in what is now Liverpool harbor, hence he called it Port Du Rossignol. Rossignol's presence there in May could not have been mere accident; he must have known from previous experience that a large tribe of Indians camped in the interior during the winter, and came down the Mersey River to the coast in May. They lingered for a time below the first falls on the Mersey, at the head of tidewater, in order to catch the salmon and alewives which came thronging in from the sea at that time of year. Later they scattered along the coast for the summer. Their name for Liverpool harbor was OGOMKEGEOK -- "the place from which we go out".

Rossignol evidently knew when to arrive and barter for their winter's catch of fur. Indeed it must have taken a succession of such visits to accustom the savages to trade -- a thing that had no precedent in their existence, and for which they had not even a name. Until the coming of white traders they merely caught enough fur for their clothing needs. Micmac tradition on the Mersey River relates the first sight of a European ship in Liverpool harbor. The savages

Salmon

were camped at/~~Sackam~~ Island Cove, at the head of tidewater, in order to spear salmon going up the river. They kept a look-out from a tall pine tree on the hill beside the cove; and from it they saw for the first time a ship. The strange craft, its giant size compared with a canoe, the tall masts and sails, all frightened them so much that they struck camp and hastened up the river and into the forest.

The trading stock of Rossignol no doubt consisted of the usual staples at that time -- brandy, blankets, beads and trinkets, knives, hatchets, iron arrowheads. About the year 1925, Lester and Lemuel Huskins, of Milton, Queens County, dug up in their pasture on the east side of the Mersey River an earthenware pot. It contained several hundred iron arrowheads, rusted together so firmly that efforts to separate them caused the thin metal to crumble. Each was about 2½ inches long and ¾ inch wide at the base. I have in my possession two iron hatchet or tomahawk blades, of early European make; one I found on the ancient Indian camp site at Indian Gardens, Mersey River; the other I found on an old portage trail between Fourth and Fifth lakes, Mersey River.

The Mersey River, which rises in the South Mountain less than 12 miles from ~~Annopolis~~ Annapolis (and with a short portage ^{to} of the Lequille stream, which flows past Fort Anne) was a much-used highway for 'the canoes of the savages traveling between Fundy waters and "Uk-che-gum" -- the ocean. Apart from this traffic, the Mersey lakes were the hunting ground of a large tribe who made their base camp at what is still called Indian Gardens, a glen where the river left its chain of lakes and began a swift descent to the sea 16 miles below at what is now Liverpool. The ancient camp site (now almost entirely drowned by the hydro-electric storage dam at Upper Lake Falls) is the largest known in Nova Scotia. Thousands of stone arrowheads and spearheads, shards of crude pottery, and stone tools of various kinds have been found on the site. The presence of these relics, and of innumerable quartz and other stone chippings. show that the camp extended down both sides of the river for a distance of

a quarter-mile below the lake outlet, and on the east side it extended up the slope to a distance of 200 yards from the river bank.

In or about the year 1905 a small stone hatchet or tomahawk was found embedded and completely overgrown in an old pine tree at Indian Gardens. Measurement and a rough calculation, based on modern tables of pine growth in the Mersey area, indicate that the tomahawk was left stuck in the tree when it was little more than a sapling, about the year 1745. Evidently there were Indians at the Gardens about the middle of the 18th century. Yet when the first white settlers from New England founded the town of Liverpool at the river mouth in 1759 the great Indian camp had been abandoned, for their records mention only a few small wandering bands.

Speaking of this ancient camp site, Titus Smith, land surveyor for the N.S. government, mentions in 1801 that "it is a piece of interval containing about 30 acres, called Indian Gardens, which has formerly been cultivated by the Indians. It has a large cross standing on it, and a number of Indian graves."

Smith got this information from Burke, the pioneer settler in the northern district of Queens County, whose small farm was on the upper waters of the Medway River. Hence Smith mistakenly assumed that the "Indian Gardens" were on the Medway.

It appears that the large and ancient camp at Indian Gardens was abandoned by the savages at some time prior to 1759, and possibly after 1745. The only clue is in the history of D'Anville's ill-fated expedition to Nova Scotia in 1746. Hundreds of French soldiers and seamen, stricken with scurvy and typhus, perished on the shores of Halifax harbor and Bedford Basin. Clothing stolen from their bodies gave the contagion of ^{lice-borne} typhus to the Indians gathered on the spot, and eventually these scattered into the interior, carrying the infection to other camps. Haliburton says "the infection ... spread with such rapidity that it destroyed more than one third of the whole tribe of the Micmacs."

Nothing else within our knowledge can account for the disappearance of the once

numerous people who congregated at Indian Gardens.

The large cross left standing over the abandoned camp bore witness that Christian influence (which must have been French) had extended to this tribe. The wide lake above Indian Gardens bears the name of Rossignol, the French trader whose ship was seized in 1604 by DeMonts in what is now Liverpool harbor. DeMonts (and his cartographer Champlain) called the harbor Port du Rossignol, and Champlain marked it so on his chart. For years the river was known as La Riviere du Rossignol. However there is no evidence that Rossignol ever journeyed up the stream to the lake region. On the contrary DeMonts arrested him aboard his ship for unlicensed trade with the Indians, and carried him back to France as a prisoner.

It is more likely that the cross at Indian Gardens was evidence of visits by French missionaries from the Fundy side of the province at Port Royal. As mentioned before, there was a constant canoe traffic between Port Royal and Port du Rossignol by way of this river, and it was well known to French travelers. For example in 1686 the Intendant of New France, De Meulles, on a tour of the whole region called Acadie, made the journey by canoe and portage from Port Royal to Port du Rossignol, and left a written account of it.

Micmac traditions tell of "Mohawk" war parties coming by this route from ~~the~~ "Tawopskek" (Annapolis) to attack the camp at Indian Gardens; and how the Micmacs from Indian Gardens waylaid and destroyed these invaders. In these traditions the battle sites vary. Sometimes it is at the ancient Indian eel-weirs on the Kejimkujik River. Sometimes it is at a place called "The Screecher", where Fourth Lake flowed into Lake Rossignol. Sometimes it is at a place called "The Hopper", between Lake Rossignol and Second Lake. (There are tales of battle between Micmacs and "Kwedech" (Mohawks) in other places in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, all in the Fundy region and adjacent rivers.) However, the home grounds of the Mohawk ~~tribe~~ tribe were in what is now the

northern part of New York state, and their raids to the eastward did not reach further than New Hampshire and the adjacent part of Maine. In all likelihood these Micmac traditions of battles with "Mohawks" had their origin in Gorham's Rangers, ~~partly~~ ^{partly} composed of Mohawks recruited ⁱⁿ the Lake Champlain region, who were brought to Nova Scotia to form part of the garrison of Fort Anne in 1744.

The presence of a large Indian tribe on the Mersey River, and their custom of migrating to the coast every spring, offered tempting possibilities for a trading post at its mouth. In addition there was a valuable salmon fishery in the river mouth, and in the summer season there were plenty of herring, mackerel and cod to be caught in the harbor and along the adjacent coast.

Various French governors of Acadie -- La Tour, Brouillan, Bonaventure, De Razilly -- and English promoters like Sir Thomas Temple and Sir William Alexander -- showed a keen interest in the strip of coast between Lahave and Cape Sable; and some were specific in their interest in the fishing and trading possibilities at Port du Rossignol.

Razilly and his aide, Denys, established such a post at Port du Rossignol in 1635, and for two or three years maintained a successful business there. However, Razilly died in 1636, and an outbreak of war forced Denys to abandon the post.

We know, too, that a French fishing post had been established long before this at Port Mouton, a few miles west of Port du Rossignol. In 1623 an English expedition, sent out by Sir William Alexander, explored the coast of Acadie from Cape Breton to Cape Sable. The account reads, in part: "At Port de Mutton ... they encountered a Frenchman that in a very short time had made a great voyage, for though he had furnished one ship away with a great number of fishes, there were ne'er so many ready to load himself and others."

How long this French fishing post continued at Port Mouton we do not know, but tradition tells us the end of it. Like most French fishing stations of the period it was used only in the spring and summer months. The fishermen came

out from France in a ship, which was anchored near the station. The post consisted of a long wooden barrack for the men, various small sheds, a boat-slip, and "flakes" of poles and brushwood for drying the codfish. The actual fishing was done from small boats, because in those days fish swarmed in every bay and even into the creeks and harbors. At the season's end the catch of codfish, dried and salted, was loaded into the ship, and the whole crew packed off for France to sell their cargo and spend the winter.

The existing tradition of the Port Mouton post and its tragic end must have been preserved by Frenchmen who eventually settled at other harbors on the coast, and handed on to their descendants, who were still living in small groups there when the English settled at Halifax in 1749. Residents of Port Mouton in the 1920's and 1930's could point out the site of the ancient French buildings, still known as Skull Hill and Skull Beach, and the small wooded island still known as Massacre.

However the clearest and best account was preserved by the Micmacs, whose ancestors were the villains of the piece. My chief informants were old Mike Mokone (locally known as "Mike McCooney") and his squaw, who lived in a shack near the mouth of Broad River, at the head of Port Mouton. Both were quiet folk, well versed in the lore of their people, living withdrawn from the white folk -- indeed living in the past. (The old man abjured the Christian faith, and affirmed his belief in Glooskap and other ancient gods and devils, the only Micmac I ever met who clung to them.)

The site of the French station was on a small rise above Wobamkek Beach, immediately opposite the south tip of Spectacle Island, which affords the best anchorage in Port Mouton. About a mile east of Spectacle lies the much smaller Massacre Island, covered with a dense growth of spruce trees, and nowadays a haunt and nesting place of crows and cormorants. On the north side of this island are the flat ledges mentioned in the Indian tales. A belief exists amongst the

inhabitants of South West Port Mouton that the Frenchmen buried money on the island, and shallow pits dug by hopeful treasure seekers may be seen. Here is the Micmac account of the massacre, as related to me by Mike Mokone and his wife in 1937:-

"Long before the English came here, there was a French camp at South West Port Mouton. They used to come there and catch fish, and dry them on the beach, and go away in the Fall. They built a long house to live in; it was made of wood but it had a foundation of granite boulders. Indians came to Port Mouton in the summer time. They got along all right with the Frenchmen till one time there was trouble over women. There was a fight, and the Frenchmen shut themselves in the house. At last the Indians tied birchbark to their arrows, and set the birchbark on fire, and shot it into the roof. That set the house on fire, and by-and-by the Frenchmen had to come out. The Indians killed some of them right there. They took the others off to the little island called Massacre Island, and tortured them. The Indians built big fires on the rock ledges there until the rock was very hot. Then they threw the Frenchmen down on the rock, and would not let them get up, and so they died. The Indians burned the French ship, too. They burned everything. The ship was made of some kind of hard oak, and did not burn very well, but it sank. When I was a boy you could go out in a canoe and see the shape of her in the seaweed on the bottom when the sun was shining.

"My grandmother told me all this when I was a boy. (i.e., about 1870 --THR) We were camped at Port Mouton, and she and I walked along the shore to sell baskets in South West Port Mouton. In those days there were pastures all along what you call now Carter's Beach and Wobamkek Beach, and there was a path through the pastures, and there was a little wooden bridge over the brook they call Tripp's River. The path went up over a grassy hill, at the end of the ridge where Mr. Willis has his cabins now, and you could still see the foundation

stones of the Frenchmen's house, quite a long house, too. People used to see skulls and bones sticking out of the sand sometimes. Since I was a boy the sand has blown in and covered the pastures and the hill where the French house used to be. But you could see the stones when I was a boy, and my grandmother pointed to them and told me the story."

Mr. Guy C. Leslie, a native of Port Mouton, and descendant of a Loyalist settler there, told me the following in 1935:-

"The knoll at the seaward end of the Wobamkek ridge, where Major Willis built his summer cottages a few years ago, was known as Skull Hill when I was a boy. There was a tradition that some Frenchmen in the old time were murdered there by Indians. The sand dunes have moved inland during the past fifty or sixty years, and killed all the trees and bushes on the knoll. In my father's time it was covered with grees and grass. Part of the tradition was that one of the Frenchmen escaped the Indians by hiding in the brook, since called Tripp's River, with only his nose sticking out, in the shadow of a stump. He lived to tell the tale. I have also heard a tradition that some French people lived at the head of ^{the} creek at Port Mouton, where the road now goes around to Bell's Point. I have heard that the first English settlers called it Hut Creek."

The massacre of the French fishermen is mentioned briefly in More's "History of Queens County". Apparently this fiendish method of torture to death was a favorite with the Indians hereabouts, for More mentions another case of it at Catherine's River, a few miles west of Port Mouton, where the savages captured an American fishing vessel about the year 1750, and killed the crew by roasting them on fire-heated rocks. Still farther west, at Port Joli, another American crew was attacked by the same Indians in 1754. According to New England records this ship's crew beat off the attack and captured a squaw named "Molly Pigtoe". (i.e. Marie Pictou -- THR) This woman had been present at the Catherine's

Ms. "Hut Creek" could be interpreted as "Hut Creek" if the Indians were the first to settle there.

River affair a few years before, and gave them an account of it.

Clearly the savages who roved about this part of the coast were a bloodthirsty lot, and their minds were set against white men, for they murdered French and English with equal unconcern. This may account for a gruesome discovery at Port Medway in the year 1766. Some men from the Liverpool settlement (founded 1759-1760) came upon an old cellar containing pieces of charred wood and the bones of four human beings and two dogs. ^{at} first these were thought to be the remains of two men and two boys who had gone by boat from Liverpool, in 1761, intending to shoot wildfowl in the uninhabited harbor of Port Medway. They were never seen again, and Liverpool folk supposed that their boat must have upset or foundered on the way.

However, Simeon Perkins, the diarist of Liverpool, went to view the remains. He wrote: "Nov. 21, 1766. I go to Port Medway to examine the bones found there ~~John Baggot, Peter, Joseph and Thomas Barker owners of~~ the bones looked old, and must have been burnt. I do not think they are the bones of the missing ones."

Perkins gives the names of the missing men. One was Joshua Harding. Crowell's "History of Barrington" (where many of the settlers were closely related to those of Liverpool) states that Joshua Harding, "one of the first settlers of Liverpool ... was killed by Indians." In this he follows the first assumption of the discoverers of the mysterious bones. But Perkins thought otherwise. He called the site "an old cellar", and refers to the age of the bones. As the first English-speaking settlers had been there only a few years it is clear that the cellar and the bones were mute evidence of much earlier white inhabitants, who could only have been French.

Note: "Mal toise" could be interpreted as "difficult soundings". The harbor is larger with much deep water, but there are tricky shoals & reefs.

→ The original name of this harbor was Port Maltois. It was visited and charted in 1746 by a French officer, Chabert, in the frigate "Sirene". As with other French names on this coast, ~~the~~ it took a new twist on the tongues of the New England fishermen, who called it "Port Medway". However Perkins often spells it "Portmetway". Old residents of the village in the 1920's still pronounced

it in that fashion, with accent on the "way" -- a clear descent from "Maltois".

Other than the old cellar and bones found at Port Medway there is ~~is~~ ^{a further} trace of French people ~~there~~, and there may be some connection between the two. It is in Micmac tradition, related to me in 1936 by the aforementioned Mike Mokone, and confirmed by Joseph Paul. Obviously it refers to the expulsion of the Acadians in 1755. Many of those in the vicinity of Annapolis fled to the forest and disappeared for years, until they deemed it safe to come forth again. Most of these refugees eventually made their way to what ~~is~~ ^{are} now Digby County and Yarmouth County, and formed what is now called the French Shore. Others made their way to the Gulf coast of New Brunswick. Undoubtedly some must have sought safety on the Atlantic face of the peninsula.

Micmac tradition given by Mokone and Paul:- A long time ago, when there were no English people on the South Shore, some Indians hunting up the Medway River met some French people, men, women and children, who had come through the woods from Annapolis. They had run away from the English soldiers. The Indians were friendly to them, and took them to a small island by Vogler's Cove, on the east side of Port Medway. The French people camped there. They said they had lost two of their women on the way through the woods. They described the place, and some of the Indian men went there and looked for them, and found them. The French women had torn their clothes to pieces, going through the thickets. They were nearly naked, and when they saw the Indians they were afraid. The Indians did not like to look at bare women. Two of them had army greatcoats that they had taken from the English after a fight. They threw the greatcoats on the ground, and walked away, making signs for the women to put the coats on. After the women put the coats on, the Indians took them to their friends at Port Medway, on the island by Vogler's Cove. The French people stayed on that island quite a long time. They lived on fish and clams. After that we do not know what happened to them. That is where the story ends.

In the Medway valley there is ~~no~~ other evidence of white men's work, much bigger than the "old cellar" mentioned by Perkins. More than twenty miles up the river from Port Medway lies what is called the Molega Indian Reserve, between lake Ponhook and Molega. It was set apart by the Nova Scotia government about the year 1840, to ~~comp~~ compensate the Medway Indians for their ancient fishing camp at Greenfield, which had been taken over by white settlers early in that century.

Joseph Howe, in his capacity as Indian Commissioner, visited the spot in 1842, and stated in his report:- "In the neighborhood of this reserve, somewhat lower down, we visited a place now covered with huge trees, but where stones have evidently been moved by the hand of man at a period to which no man's memory now extends. The remains of a rude wall, much sunk, covered with leaves and decayed vegetable substance, and out of which old trees are growing, is easily traced. The Indians knew nothing of it, neither did the early settlers, and neither my companions nor myself were able to satisfy ourselves as to its origin."

An article on a proposed "Medway canal", appearing in the Halifax newspaper British North American, Nov. 19, 1853, eleven years after Howe's visit, has this to say:- "At the head of Ponhook, above the outlet of Wildcat River (the name of the stream from Malagoose into Ponhook) exist the remains of a stone camp or fort, claimed by the Indians as the work of their forefathers. It measures 200 feet in length by 60 feet in breadth."

No stone works of Indian origin exist in Nova Scotia, and all the history and habits of the Micmac tribe make this "claim" ridiculous. Also there is the previous evidence of Howe to the contrary. The only possible explanation is that this stone fortification was made by the French at a remote time; and at this remote spot in the interior of the province they could only have been refugees from the British expulsion of 1755 and the succeeding years.

Fifteen miles to the north of this ancient stone work, by way of Molega

Lake and Pleasant River, a tributary of the Medway, the old Acadian trail from Lahave to Port Royal crossed what is now the north-east angle of Queens County. James F. More, the first historian of Queens County, for many years a professional land surveyor (born 1802), mentions the old trail thus:-

" ... The next stream is Beaver Brook (a tributary of Pleasant River) on the western side of which I discovered part of the old Acadian road, which formerly led from Annapolis Royal to Lahave, but now of course not used, but serves as a memento of long bygone days."

The presence of this road or path, fording the Pleasant River at a point where it is easily navigable by canoe to Ponhook and Molega, suggests that Acadian refugees from the vicinity of Annapolis may have fled into the forest by this ancient track; and at Beaver Brook they could have got canoes from the Indians and made their way to Ponhook, where they fortified their camp and remained for some years.

When the New Englanders came to Queens County in 1759-60 they adopted some of the Indian place-names, but usually they scattered their own nomenclature over the countryside. Yet one French name survives in the Mersey valley to commemorate a time when earlier explorers ranged up the river from the coast. The name is Bon Mature, applied to a lake and the surrounding tract of forest, on the west side of the Mersey about eight miles above the town of Liverpool. It means "Good spars" -- clear evidence that Frenchmen with an eye for ship timber must have ranged at least that far from the coast in days gone by.

Good mast timber/^{was} ~~is~~ not to be found everywhere, even in the virgin forest of the 18th century. Mr. John Wentworth, Surveyor of the King's Woods (and later Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia) located this ^{SAME} patch of tall pines long after the French had vanished from Queens County, and proclaimed it a reserve for His Majesty's Navy.

The Micmac population in Queens County now (1949) is very small. It has dwindled sharply in the past 30 years. Of those remaining, the younger generation know little and care less about their language and the ancient lore. The older people still use a number of French words in their native speech, although French influence ⁱⁿ Queens County ceased before 1759. See S.T.Rand's "Dictionary of the Language of the Micmac Indians", in which he points out many words French in origin and twisted in pronunciation to suit the Micmac tongue. Rand began his study of the Micmacs as a young man in Queens County. He was pastor of the Baptist church at Milton in 1842, when there was a fairly large Micmac community just above the village, and elsewhere in Queens County. In 1846 he dedicated his life to mission work amongst the Micmacs.

Further proof of the old French influence in Queens County, as elsewhere in western Nova Scotia, is in the surnames of Micmac families. Nearly all were derived from the Christian names of Frenchmen, perhaps by adoption or imitation, perhaps by actual baptism by early French missionaries, but probably as a direct result of ~~the~~ ancient liaisons between French men and Indian women. Most of the Micmac people show traces of this early mixture with the whites, in their features and often in the color of their eyes.

Of the Micmacs who live today in Queens County, or lived there during the past century, only the Pictou family have a name that is truly Indian. (Indians of this family or clan were living in summer on the Queens County coast at least as early as 1750 -- see page 9 of this typescript.) The present family named Labrador is an old one also, but it is probably derived from Bras D'Or in Cape Breton; a reminder of a time during the French regime when Micmac people of the eastern clans mingled and intermarried with those of the west part of the peninsula.

With these exceptions all the Micmac family names known in Queens County during the past century were derived from French Christian names. It should be kept in mind that the Micmac could not pronounce "r" properly, and usually sub-

stituted "l". Similarly he could not distinguish between the ~~XXXX~~ "b" and "p" sounds of English and French, nor the sounds of "g" and "k". Here are the names:-

<u>MICMAC</u>	<u>FRENCH</u>
Tony	Antoine
Cobleal	Gabriel
Charles	Charles
Dominic	Dominique
Francis	Francois
Glode	Claude
Jeremy	Jerome
Lewis	Louis
Luxi	Alexis
Malti	Martin
Meuse	Moise
Newell	Newell Noel
Paul	Paul
Penall	Bernard

Of all these families the Glodes were the most prominent, and the nearest in appearance and physique to the aboriginal type. They were, in general, of a superior bearing and intelligence, and were said to be lineal descendants of the ancient chief of the Mersey valley tribe. This large tribe, which once occupied the great camp at Indian Gardens, and spread its fishing and hunting parties ^{in summer} along the western coasts of Nova Scotia, undoubtedly was the so-called "Cape Sable" tribe encountered by the French in early days, and later much mentioned in New England documents of the colonial period, when the western peninsula of Nova Scotia was known loosely and entirely as "Cape Sable".

It has even been suggested that the Glode family derive their name from Claude de la Tour, the famous French pioneer on the south-western shore of N.S.

Such, then, are our only clues to the story of French influence in Queens County, dating back to the earliest days of European contact. We know that this influence existed certainly for 150 years, and probably more than two centuries; and that it penetrated inland by the Mersey and Medway river valleys to the very heart of the peninsula.

The reasons why it did not take root are clear. There was very little arable land in these regions of rock and forest; the coast was exposed to attack from wandering pirates and privateers ^{from New England,} and the savages were of an uncertain and often ferocious temper compared with those in contact with the French at Port Royal on the Fundy side. The French who did live at various times on the South Shore were in small groups. The largest was at La Have, and in or about the year 1643 these people were removed to Port Royal. In or about the year 1630 Claude and Charles de la Tour removed their chief trading establishment from Cape Sable to the mouth of the St. John River, but some Frenchmen remained in the Cape Sable region from Pubnico to Port La Tour. When the English expedition under Cornwallis came to ~~found~~ ^{establish} the city of Halifax in 1749, they found a few French people living at "Merliguiche" -- the site of Lunenburg. They also learned that a French ship, having on board M. de Ramezay and a number of settlers from Louisburg, had passed "Merliguiche" and stopped for a time in Port Mouton. It was rumored that Ramezay intended a settlement at Port Mouton, but later they learned that his object was to recreate the old French post at the mouth of the St. John. Presumably Ramezay had a reason for calling at Port Mouton, possibly for firewood and fresh water. In that case it is possible that as late as 1749 there were a few French at Port Mouton. If so, they had vanished by 1759, when the first New Englanders settled at nearby Liverpool.

J.H.R.
(never published)