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Subsistence in the Conquest Era: Food Security, Agriculture, and Allegiance in the Governance
of Nova Scotia, 1710-1720

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HIE 424: Thesis

Supervised by: Dr. Jim Kenny

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Abstract

This study examines the conquest era in Nova Scotia between 1710 and 1720, placing food security and agriculture at the forefront of policy and debate while British authorities struggled to transform Acadia into Nova Scotia amidst imperial transitions and geopolitical conflicts. Primary sources, primarily from national archives, such as judicial records, letters, petitions, government documents, meeting minutes, government and military reports, census data, and trade records are examined to understand the relationship between agricultural practices and policies in Nova Scotia and the interactions between Acadian and Britons, with some consideration of indigenous peoples, during and after key events during the conquest era, namely: 1) the British occupation and control of mainland Acadia beginning in 1710 and confirmed by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713; 2) the increase in British interest and power in the region from 1713 to 1719; 3) the establishment of the Nova Scotia Council in 1720 and the subsequent increase of British institutions in Nova Scotia. Ultimately, this study argues that British concerns regarding food security directed their governance of Nova Scotia from its outset and underlay local, regional, and colonial geopolitical tensions throughout the period, including issues of allegiance in Nova Scotia.

Keywords: food security, agriculture, agricultural policy, conquest era, oath of allegiance, Acadia, Nova Scotia

Note on Terms, Quotations, and Translations

Generally, terms and locations have been left as they were most commonly referred to between 1710 and 1720. In some cases, terms and locations have been clarified in corresponding footnotes. All quotations have been left in their original form, with no attempt to correct for spelling or grammar. French quotations have been provided in the body of the study, with translations provided in corresponding footnotes. All translations are my own.

Introduction

Three main people groups lived in Nova Scotia between 1710 and 1720: Mi'kmaq, Acadians, and Britons. Contact with New England settlers for trade was a frequent occurrence during much of this period, although they did not begin to settle in Nova Scotia until 1759.¹ While each people group had common interests throughout this period of imperial conflict, tension, and regime change, they were often guided by their individualistic needs, especially with regard to their politics and resources. Colonial rivalries—six colonial wars involving Acadia and then Nova Scotia took place within a 75 year timespan—heightened tension between people groups and highlighted their differences as they fought alongside allies or struggled to remain neutral in conflict.² Stephen Patterson provides a summary of the general atmosphere in Nova

¹ See Christopher Hodson, *The Acadian Diaspora: An Eighteenth-Century History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 15-46 for discussion of Acadian and Nova Scotian trade with New England. The Planter Studies Series, which includes: Margaret Conrad, ed, *They Planted Well: New England Planters in Maritime Canada*, Planter Studies Series, No. 1 (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1988); Margaret Conrad, ed, *Making Adjustments: Change and Continuity in Planter Nova Scotia, 1759-1800*, Planter Studies Series, No. 2 (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1991); Margaret Conrad, ed, *Intimate Relations: Family and Community in Planter Nova Scotia*, Planter Studies Series, No. 3 (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1995); Margaret Conrad and Barry Moody, eds, *Planter Links: Community and Culture in Colonial Nova Scotia*, Planter Studies Series, No. 4 (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 2001); and, T. Stephen Henderson and Wendy G. Robicheau, eds, *The Nova Scotia Planters in the Atlantic World, 1759-1830*, Planter Studies Series, No. 5 (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 2012), offers the most complete account of New England settlement in Nova Scotia beginning in 1759. See also Margaret Conrad, *At the Ocean's Edge: a History of Nova Scotia to Confederation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2020). <https://doi.org/10.3138/9781487532680>.

² See John Grenier, *The Far Reaches of Empire: War in Nova Scotia, 1710-1760* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press: 2008) for detailed discussion of these wars, which included King William's War (1688-1697), Queen Anne's War (1702-1713), Father Rale's War (1722-1725), King George's War (1744-1748), Father Le Loutre's War (1749-1755), and the French and Indian War (1754-1763).

Scotia during the second half of the eighteenth century, noting that Nova Scotia's political landscape was "a conflict for space, for control, for power" where:

[...] French and British civil and military authorities sought to implement their respective official policies, New England fishermen and merchants largely did what they wanted, French missionaries dabbled in politics and diplomacy, and Acadians did their best to avoid either British or French control. Interests were fragmented and behaviours frequently individualistic. What applied to the newcomers applied equally to the natives, who did not behave as a uniform bloc, but rather sometimes disagreed with one another, occasionally had to deal with renegade individuals and often subordinated their broad common interests to the immediate imperatives of time and place.³

Unsurprisingly, in the background of this chaotic moment in time was the continual struggle to subsist and—ideally—to thrive. This was especially true in 1710, when the British captured Port Royal and occupied Acadia, which was ceded to them by the French in 1713 under the Treaty of Utrecht, ushering new dynamics of governance and power into Nova Scotia.

Acadia was first settled by the French in 1604 after King Henry IV granted Pierre du Gua, Sieur de Mons a ten-year commercial monopoly in New France and expanded his powers as lieutenant-general in New France to settle Acadia and enforce royal authority across the colony itself.⁴ Permanent French settlements were not established in earnest until the 1630s,⁵ although minimal state involvement in the area allowed settlers to create a unique Acadian culture that eventually distinguished them as an independent people group. Low immigration rates to Acadia from France also meant that their population burgeoned based mainly on the

³ Stephen E. Patterson, "Indian-White Relations in Nova Scotia, 1749-61: A Study in Political Interaction," *Acadiensis* 23, no. 1 (1993): 23-24.

⁴ Gregory Kennedy, "Marshland Colonization in Acadia and Poitou During the Seventeenth Century," *Acadiensis* 42, no. 1 (2013): 39.

⁵ Karl W. Butzer, "French Wetland Agriculture in Atlantic Canada and its European Roots: Different Avenues to Historical Diffusion," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 92, no. 3 (2002): 458.

original groups of settlers who arrived, adding to the somewhat insular nature of the Acadian culture and communities.⁶ As Acadian population and settlement growth was a non-state phenomenon, indigenous populations in the region—including Mi'kmaq, whose territory, Mi'kma'ki, covered the areas that Acadia was carved from⁷—generally tolerated their presence and built trade relationships with them.⁸ In some cases, intermarriage between indigenous people and Acadians also occurred.⁹ That said, when the British occupied Acadia in 1710 and subsequently introduced a permanent state government there following the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, dynamics throughout the region shifted as Acadians and indigenous peoples were forced to transition into a new reality involving state-led colonial initiatives. This was particularly

⁶ John G. Reid, “The ‘Conquest’ of Acadia: Narratives,” in *The “Conquest” of Acadia, 1710: Imperial, Colonial, and Aboriginal Constructions*, eds John G. Reid, Maurice Basque, Elizabeth Mancke, Barry Moody, Geoffrey Plan, and William Wicken (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 8.

⁷ Jeffers Lennox, *Homelands and Empires: Indigenous Spaces, Imperial Fictions, and Competition for Territory in Northeastern North America, 1690-1763* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017), 3-5.

⁸ Lennox, *Homelands and Empires: Indigenous Spaces, Imperial Fictions, and Competition for Territory in Northeastern North America, 1690-1763*, 3-5; John Reid, “The ‘Conquest’ of Acadia: Narratives,” in Reid et al, eds. *The “Conquest” of Acadia, 1710: Imperial, Colonial, and Aboriginal Constructions*, 8.

⁹ Olive Dickason, “From ‘One Nation’ in the Northeast to ‘New Nation’ in the Northwest: A Look at the Emergence of the Metis,” in *The New Peoples: Being and Becoming Metis in North America*, eds. Jennifer S. Brown and Jaqueline Peterson (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1985), 22-28; Olive Dickason, *Canada's First Nations : A History of Founding Peoples from Earliest Times* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1992), 169-170; Naomi Griffiths, *Contexts of Acadian History, 1686-1784* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), 23-25; Naomi Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian: A North American Border People, 1604-1755* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), 37, 57, 87, 179, 259; Leslie F.S. Upton, *Micmacs and Colonists: Indian-White Relations in the Maritimes, 1713-1867* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1979), 16-47.

alarming for indigenous peoples who had not been faced with a genuine threat to their control of the region in the past and had always retained their autonomy.¹⁰

Between 1604 and 1710, Acadians developed a clear social structure revolving around agricultural production and family life in many settlements across the Acadia. Initial attempts to clear forested highlands for agricultural use in Acadia had yielded little reward when French emigrants arrived in the early 1600s due to existing vegetation and low soil quality. Accordingly, settlers with knowledge of wetland reclamation techniques out of western France began transforming plentiful salt marshes in the region's lowland using a hallmark of Acadian agriculture, the aboiteau.¹¹ Acadian aboiteaux consisted of a sluice with a clapper valve, built in intertidal zones. At high-tide, the clapper valve would shut to keep salt water out of the marsh and at low tide, it would open to allow fresh marsh water out into the sea via the sluice.¹² Above the sluice, a dyke—essentially a large earthen wall—was built to stop sea water from spilling into reclaimed wetlands at high tide using many strong logs and clay chinking, which required maintenance over time.¹³ Ditches dug on either side of the dyke improved wetland drainage. After aboiteaux were constructed to transform a salt water marsh, the land sat for five to ten

¹⁰ Reid, "The 'Conquest' of Acadia: Narratives," 8.

¹¹ Butzer, "French Wetland Agriculture in Atlantic Canada and its European Roots: Different Avenues to Historical Diffusion," 455; Matthew G. Hatvany, "The Origins of the Acadian Aboiteau: An Environmental-Historical Geography of the Northeast," *Historical Geography* 30 (2002): 121-123.

¹² Hatvany, "The Origins of the Acadian Aboiteau: An Environmental-Historical Geography of the Northeast," 123; Kevin Leonard, "The Origin and Dispersal of Dykeland Technology," *Le Cahiers de la Société Historique Acadienne* 22, no. 1 (1991): 37-38.

¹³ Butzer, "French Wetland Agriculture in Atlantic Canada and its European Roots," 455-456; Hatvany, "The Origins of the Acadian Aboiteau," 123, Kennedy, "Marshland Colonization in Acadia and Poitou During the Seventeenth Century," 53, Leonard, "The Origin and Dispersal of Dykeland Technology," 37-38.

years prior to being planted to allow the marshland to be fully reclaimed it drained and natural precipitation desalinated the soil to increase its arability.¹⁴

Land in Acadia, the general layout of which can be understood in Figure 1, was divided into two separate geometries based on wetland reclamation. For the most part, segmented linear settlements ran along rivers and shorelines with dwellings grouped at the base of the uplands and agricultural land running down from them towards an initial dyke, as in Port Royal as Figure 2 shows. Land was divided based on the location of an initial dyke and formed irregular plots based on topography, with family units constructing and maintaining their aboiteaux independently and passing their land down through generations.¹⁵

¹⁴ Hatvany, 124; Leonard, 36-42. A version of this paragraph appears in Grace Schmelzle, "Monks, Dykes, and Farmers: Acadian and British Use of Wetland Reclamation Technology in the Bay of Fundy Region" (HIE 248, Royal Military College of Canada, 2020), 6-7.

¹⁵ Butzer, 458; Kennedy, "Marshland Colonization," 55-56.

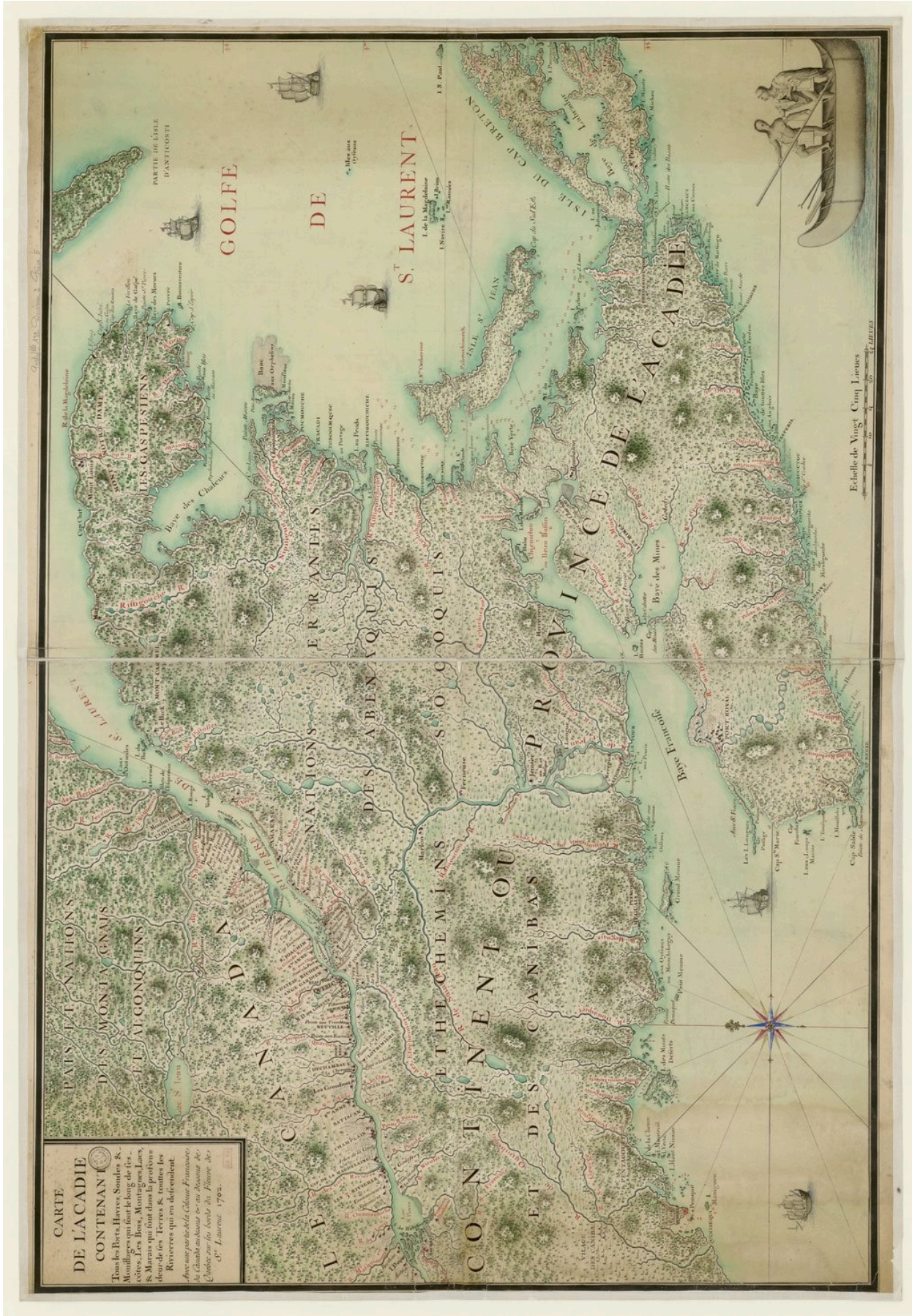


Figure 1. Acadia is shown in this 1701 map, with the major settlements of Port Royal in its north-east along the Baye Francoise (Bay of Fundy) and Les Mines (Mines) in the north-east near the Baye des Mines. Notably, to the north of Acadia is Indigenous and French territory. To its east, L'Isle de Cap Breton (Île Royale) marks another French colony. After the Treaty of Utrecht, the French retained Île Royale while the British began to transform Acadia into Nova Scotia, causing British anxieties regarding the strength and proximity of French settlements and military fortifications on Île Royale. (Map titled *Carte de l'Acadie*, 1702, Bibliothèque nationale de France, département Cartes et plans, GE SH 18 PF 132 DIV 2 P 5, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b530900430/fl.item.r=acadie#>).

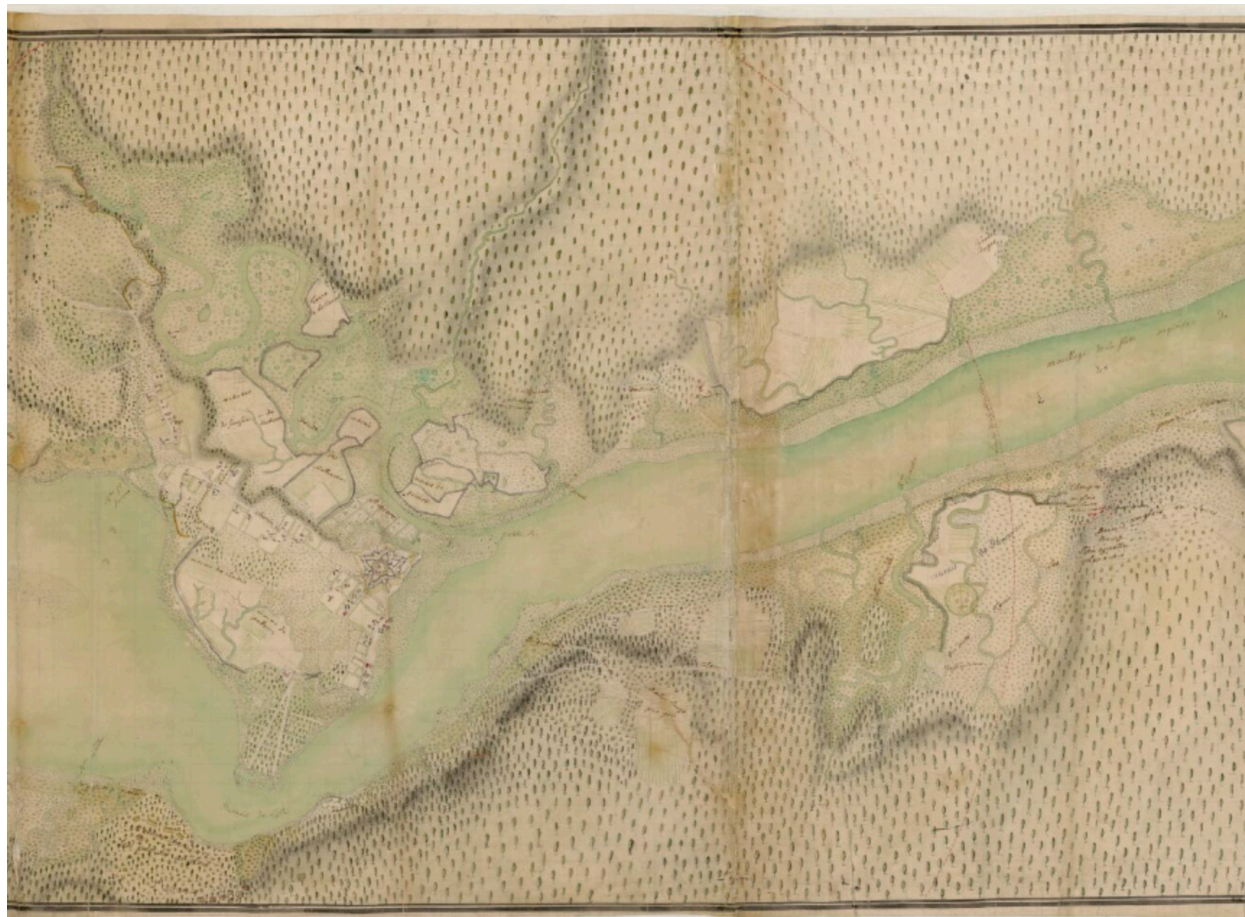


Figure 2. This French plan for the settlement around Port Royal, likely published in the late 1600s, clearly depicts the land geometry there. Dykes are visible, represented by thick grey lines, running along the bottom of multiple farm plots with dwellings located at the opposite ends of the plots. As can be seen in the map, settlements were organized around agricultural land, which was created using dykes that ensured the marshland remained fertile. (Map titled *Plan de la banlieue du Port Royal*, 17th century, Bibliothèque nationale de France, département Cartes et plans, GE SH 18 PF 133 DIV 8 P 5, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b53089727d/f1.item.zoom>).

Settlements on larger estuarine zones such as in Les Mines utilized larger community wetland reclamation projects to address the complex ecological conditions they faced. In Les Mines, communities typically expanded the scope of their wetland reclamation projects based on demographic need as their population grew and new marriages produced new family units. As such, land holdings were not typically passed between generations, producing a different land

geometry than was observed along rivers and shorelines, such as at Port Royal.¹⁶ In both cases, socioeconomic needs within the community were met through subsistence farming despite difficult ecological and topographic realities as a direct result of wetland reclamation efforts.¹⁷ Clearly, agriculture was deeply integrated into Acadian communities.

When the French fort at Port Royal was surrendered to the British on 5 October 1710, British military forces became an occupying force in Acadia, whose population consisted of approximately 4600 indigenous people—the majority of whom were Mi'kmaq and all of whom were part of the Wabanaki Confederacy—and 2000 Acadians at the largest estimation of its boundaries, which were highly contested.¹⁸ While indigenous populations in Acadia had always far outnumbered its French population, conflict between the groups had been limited largely because Acadians were relatively disinterested in territorial expansion and offered mutually beneficial trade opportunities.¹⁹ After 1710, British settlers and soldiers in Acadia or Nova Scotia were primarily isolated in Annapolis Royal—which became the British name for Port Royal—and the settlement of Canso—which was associated with the fishery. Their numbers were

¹⁶ Butzer, 458.

¹⁷ Butzer, 458. A version of this paragraph appears in Grace Schmelzle, “Monks, Dykes, and Farmers: Acadian and British Use of Wetland Reclamation Technology in the Bay of Fundy Region” (HIE 248, Royal Military College of Canada, 2020), 7-8.

¹⁸ Reid et al, “Introduction,” *The “Conquest” of Acadia, 1710: Imperial, Colonial, and Aboriginal Constructions*, viiii. While John Reid et al note that the exact sizes of indigenous populations who were in the area are difficult to determine with certainty, they estimate that 2500 Mi'kmaq, 500 Wulstukwiuk (Maliseet), and 600 Passamaquoddy and Penobscot lived within the boundaries of Acadia in 1710.

¹⁹ Lennox, *Homelands and Empires: Indigenous Spaces, Imperial Fictions, and Competition for Territory in Northeastern North America, 1690-1763*, 3-5.

reinforced in times of conflict, but did not exceed roughly 400 people in peacetime until after the establishment of Halifax in 1749.²⁰

Until the Treaty of Utrecht confirmed Britain's ownership of Acadia in 1713, its populations generally assumed that life would continue relatively unchanged. Importantly, the British were known occupiers in the region: French rule had been the general norm in Acadia since its establishment in 1604, but the colony had changed hands between the British and the French at various points throughout the proceeding century.²¹ The French had lost control of Acadia's main military centre, Fort Royal, in 1621, after which point Scottish attempts at settlement saw the erection of Scot's Fort in Port Royal, although this territorial squabble was resolved quickly. In 1654, Oliver Cromwell's forces occupied Acadia and an English governor was appointed, but the colony was returned to France under the Treaty of Breda in 1667. Port Royal was captured by the British again in 1690 and returned to the French under the Treaty of Ryswick in 1697. With a century-long history of limited state intervention in the region, Acadians had reason to believe that British possession of Acadia would be impermanent: the region had been occupied by the British before, but it had never become permanently British.²² With the Treaty of Utrecht, this was no longer true.

²⁰ Reid et al, "Introduction," to *The "Conquest" of Acadia, 1710: Imperial, Colonial, and Aboriginal Constructions*, viiii.

²¹ See Arthur G. Doughty, *The Acadian Exiles: a Chronicle of the Land of Evangeline* (Toronto: Brook & Company, 1922), 17-27; Lennox, *Homelands and Empires*, 15-17; Elizabeth Mancke and John G. Reid, "Elites, States, and the Imperial Contest for Acadia," in Reid, et al *The "Conquest" of Acadia, 1710: Imperial, Colonial, and Aboriginal Constructions*, 25-47.

²² Arthur G. Doughty, *The Acadian Exiles: a Chronicle of the Land of Evangeline*, 17-27 and Lennox, *Homelands and Empires*, 15-17.

As of 1713, the British were faced with applying the terms of the Treaty of Utrecht throughout Nova Scotia, while Acadians attempted to maintain their status quo as a borderland population used to its position as a French or British prize in imperial conflict and unused to state administration.²³ British colonial attitudes towards indigenous peoples assumed that they had ceded their land rights within peninsular Nova Scotia under the Treaty of Utrecht and would fade into the colony's background, although the treaty never mentions the people group.²⁴ The British wanted to control Nova Scotia and its populations to ensure that they could not bolster French power in the region. The French, on the other hand, wanted Acadian settlers to strengthen Île Royale.²⁵ Acadian agriculture—so concretely rooted in Acadian culture and communities—was a benefit to everyone, offering food security and improving economic stability.

That said, Acadia's status as a British colony in 1713 was not well reflected within peninsular Nova Scotia itself as very few British settlers or authorities arrived there until 1749. Some British soldiers and Colonel Richard Philipps—who was appointed Governor of Nova Scotia in 1717—were stationed at Annapolis Royal where the British seat of government was located until the founding of Halifax in 1749, but fewer than one dozen people of British descent

²³ John Mack Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme: The Tragic Story of the Expulsion of the French Acadians from their American Homeland*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 2005): 138-141; Mancke and Reid, "Elites, States, and the Imperial Contest for Acadia," 46-47.

²⁴ A dichotomy between Indigenous and British conceptions of agency, land use, and land ownership was established from the outset of British control in Nova Scotia as a result of this assumption, although it would take time to develop, in 1720, into outright conflict between the two groups. Jennifer Reid, *Myth, Symbol, and Colonial Encounter: British and Mi'kmaq in Acadia, 1700-1867*, (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1995) 33-34, 39-41, 98-99.

²⁵ Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme: The Tragic Story of the Expulsion of the French Acadians from their American Homeland*, 140-141.

permanently settled at Annapolis Royal for at least three decades.²⁶ New England fisherman and occasional merchants could be found in Annapolis Royal or at Canso, located at the north-eastern tip of Nova Scotia, during the fishing season, but the permanent British population was still greatly outnumbered by Mi'kmaq and Acadian populations. Given this, British authorities were faced with the unusual problem of enforcing strong governance over an established, predominantly Acadian population in a colony without any formal colonial government institutions, as Acadia had always been administered through local governments whose decisions were based on community consensus and had generally been unmolested by its nominal French colonial government.²⁷ In essence, Nova Scotia was as a British frontier zone until 1749, not the settled British colony suggested by its legal status.

Strong parliamentary institutions with legitimate legislative power remained conspicuously absent in Nova Scotia until 1749, when the founding of Halifax saw an influx of at least 2500 British settlers led by Governor Edward Cornwallis and the decision to model a newly minted government in Nova Scotia after the system of Quarter Sessions that existed in England.²⁸ That said, the small British administration in Annapolis Royal did develop its own methods of governing the populations present in Nova Scotia: as early as 1713 “a court made up

²⁶ C. Bruce Ferguson, *Local Government in Nova Scotia* (Halifax: The Institute of Public Affairs Dalhousie University, 1961): 4-5; James Murray Beck, *The Government of Nova Scotia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957): 3-4.

²⁷ Rosolino A. Candela and Vincent J. Geloso, “Trade or raid: Acadian Settlers and native Americans before 1755,” *Public Choice* 188, (2021): 550-551; Ferguson, *Local Government in Nova Scotia*, 4-5; Beck, *The Government of Nova Scotia*, 3-6; Gregory Kennedy, *Something of a Peasant Paradise?: Comparing Rural Societies in Acadie and the Loudunais, 1604-1755*, (Montréal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2014), 92. See Beck’s *The Government of Nova Scotia* for an in-depth study of Nova Scotia’s government from the 1700s to the 1900s.

²⁸ Ferguson, 5-9; Beck, 4-6.

of four British soldiers and two Acadians [...] met twice a week to hear and settle disputes and register transactions in land,”²⁹ and in 1719 Governor Philips was directed by the British Board of Trade and Plantations to form a representative body in order to enact laws and attract settlers, which resulted in the formation of His Majesty’s Council of Nova Scotia in 1720—the first administrative, legislative, and judicial body of Nova Scotia—and a general court in 1721.³⁰ Despite these efforts, the British government in Nova Scotia essentially functioned as a supervisory body in place to mediate conflicts between people groups in Nova Scotia until 1749, working to assert its authority by degrees rather than as a strong legislative body capable of upholding the characteristics of an effective representative government.

This study will examine the conquest era between 1710 and 1720, placing food security and agriculture at the forefront of policy and debate while British authorities struggled to transform Acadia into Nova Scotia amidst imperial transitions and geopolitical conflicts. While geopolitics motivated the initial conquest of Acadia and remained important as it developed into a British frontier zone, authorities’ thoughts quickly turned to fulfilling basic food needs within Nova Scotia. These concerns permeated complex debates regarding the demographics and administration of Nova Scotia and forced the creation of policy and agricultural regulations designed to achieve food security there. In general, the conquest era in Nova Scotia has been overlooked by scholars in favour of discussion of the grand dérangement in Nova Scotia in 1755

²⁹ Ferguson, 4.

³⁰ Beck, 3-4; “Instruction for Richard Philips Esq’r His Majesty’s Gov’r of Placentia in Newfoundland and Cap General of the Province of Nova Scotia, or Accadie in America,” Governor of Virginia’s copy of instructions given by Lords of Trade to Colonel Richard Phillips published in *Colonial Office and Predecessors: Nova Scotia and Cape Breton Entry Books, 1710-1867*, 19 June 1719.

and the numerous imperial conflicts in the North Atlantic region during the eighteenth century. The immediate impacts of the conquest of Acadia created changes that were visible only over time, but obvious imperial transition was beginning across the North Atlantic at the same time, drawing scholars' focuses.

Within the context of broader geopolitical problems in the North Atlantic region in the eighteenth century, this study will use archival materials (primarily from the Nova Scotia Archives) to explore how basic concerns regarding food security shaped the governance of Acadia and Nova Scotia after the British conquest of Port Royal in 1710. Food security was a key concern in the geopolitical landscape of Acadia, Nova Scotia, and nearby French colonies such as Île Royale. It informed British enforcement of the Treaty of Utrecht's terms, heightened concerns regarding Acadians' allegiance to the British, and shaped early agricultural policy and regulation by an evolving British regime in Nova Scotia between 1710 and 1720.

For the purposes of this paper, *food security* will be defined as a state of being where all people have permanent and stable physical, social, and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs for the demands of life. *Agriculture* will function as an umbrella term referring to both the cultivation of land and animal husbandry, sometimes together and sometimes separately. Context will make the exact meaning of the term clear. *Agricultural policy* will be defined as the laws governing domestic agriculture, the agricultural industry, and the import and export of agricultural goods, including livestock. *Laws* will be considered to include proclamations issued by Governors of Nova Scotia given the limited legislative power exercised by Nova Scotia's government until 1749. *Agricultural practices* will be defined as the actions of farmers related to the cultivation of land or of livestock. The term *agricultural system*

will be applied more generally to denote the overarching agricultural practices that are common to the majority of a people group or multiple people groups, such as the Acadian system of aboiteaux agriculture. Mi'kma'ki and Acadia will be discussed and occasionally referred to during the period after 1713 as they can be considered nations through self-determination and continued to exercise agency after the Treaty of Utrecht, but *Nova Scotia* will denote the area governed by British authorities from 1713 onwards.

To establish debates around food security, agricultural policy, and agricultural regulation in Nova Scotia between 1710 and 1720, this study will evaluate primary sources found in national archives such as judicial records, letters, petitions, government documents, meeting minutes, government and military reports, census data, and trade records to examine the relationship between agricultural practices and policies in Nova Scotia and the interactions between Acadian and Britons, with some consideration of indigenous peoples, during and after key events during this period, namely: 1) the British occupation and control of mainland Acadia beginning in 1710 and confirmed by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713; 2) the increase in British interest and power in the region from 1713 to 1719; 3) the establishment of the Nova Scotia Council in 1720 and the subsequent increase of British institutions in Nova Scotia.

This exploration will address many questions about the importance of food security between 1710 and 1720, such as: What role did indigenous peoples, Acadians, and Britons play in food security? What dynamics existed regarding food production and agriculture? In what ways did the Treaty of Utrecht reflect the importance of food security and agriculture in Nova Scotia? How did food security influence policy creation and British decisions in administering Nova Scotia. Discussion surrounding these questions will show that the British government in

Nova Scotia needed Acadian marshland agriculture to subsist as the colony became more established, but it also recognized the economic opportunity and commercial value constituted in the marshlands' potential for intensified cultivation. Thus, British authorities developed agricultural policy—albeit shadowed by the economic and political impacts of imperial tensions—to ensure the growth of the agricultural industry in the region, to safeguard the efficacy of its agricultural practices, and to regulate the trade of resulting agricultural products. Such policies elicited responses from British merchants and Acadians who were impacted by the restrictions and expectations they created, causing them to seek out forums in which to air their concerns and work to mitigate the negative economic and political ramifications that new agricultural policies had for each people group. That said, socioeconomic and sociopolitical interactions between Mi'kmaq, Acadians, and Britons in Nova Scotia occurred within a delicately constructed framework of emerging British institutions, allowing each group enough agency to advocate for their conceptions of land use and effective agricultural practices, but ultimately leaving the British leadership within Nova Scotia's population as the authority on agricultural policy.

This study's treatment of food security during the conquest era will be divided into four chapters. A preliminary chapter will examine prominent historiographical narratives of the conquest of Acadia in order to contextualize the study of food security in the conquest era that will follow. The first substantive chapter, "Setting the Stage for New Agricultural Policy: Problems with Acadian Liberty to Leave Nova Scotia, Agricultural Potential, and the Need for Food Security," will introduce French, British, and Acadian sources related to the 1710 conquest of Acadia and the 1713 Treaty of Utrecht in order to evaluate the importance of food security in establishing early British policies for the governance of Nova Scotia. This chapter will establish

that food security was an immediate concern for British authorities after conquering Acadia, which directed their policies to protect the Acadian population demographic within Nova Scotia as a source of agricultural knowledge and labour after the Treaty of Utrecht entered into force in 1713.

The second substantive chapter, “Legitimacy and Security: Building Authority, Agricultural Debate, and The Oaths of Allegiance,” will shift focus to realities on the ground in Nova Scotia to demonstrate that food security was a major concern within day-to-day life as well as policy. This chapter will utilize correspondence between British authorities, Acadians, and English merchants in Nova Scotia to establish that British attempts to elicit an unconditional oath of allegiance from the Acadians were rooted in fears that food insecurity would become a fixture within the colony if the Acadians were to support the French or remain neutral in colonial conflicts between empires in the North Atlantic. The final substantive chapter, “The New British Granary?: Establishing Systems of Governance and New Agricultural Policies,” will demonstrate that British fears regarding food insecurity and their relationship to the oath of allegiance manifested in agricultural policies and regulations by 1720 designed to increase British power, authority, and legitimacy in Nova Scotia in order to assert control over the agricultural industry there and to reduce Acadian capacity to act without deference to British institutions. The Conclusion will confirm the importance of food security as a foundational issue in Acadia and Nova Scotia during the conquest era between 1710 and 1720, reaffirming that it directed British governance of Nova Scotia from its outset and underlay local, regional, and colonial geopolitical tensions throughout the period. Ultimately, this study will evaluate food security as a foundational issue during the conquest era between 1710 and 1720, suggesting that the broader

literature of Nova Scotian history from the conquest era on be reevaluated with food security in mind.

Chapter One

Conquest and Imperial Transitions: Historiography of the 1710 to 1720 Transformation of French Acadia to British Nova Scotia

The British occupation of Port Royal in 1710 and the Treaty of Utrecht's transference of Acadia's ownership to Britain in 1713 marked a reintroduction of British authority in Acadia.³¹ However, Britain's grasp on its new colony was weak despite its legal ownership of the region: (1) the British garrison at Annapolis Royal was very small and there was no mechanism in place from which the British government could exercise legislative power in the region; (2) almost no permanent English settlers arrived in Nova Scotia to bolster British presence in the area until 1749; and (3) the Treaty of Utrecht granted British ownership of Nova Scotia based on its "ancient boundaries," which was a vague description that led to conflict between French and British forces regarding the boundaries of the land each empire was entitled to.³² Many scholars have argued that conflict in Nova Scotia discouraged British settlement in the region, which was essentially a British frontier zone, and limited the state's desire to increase its expenditure to fund

³¹ The French had lost control of Acadia's main military centre, Fort Royal in the early 1600s after the Scottish establishment of Nova Scotia and the erection of Scot's Fort in Port Royal, although this territorial squabble was resolved quickly. In 1654, Oliver Cromwell's forces occupied Acadia and an English governor was appointed, but the colony was returned to France under the Treaty of Breda in 1667. Port Royal was captured by the British again in 1690 and returned to the French under the Treaty of Ryswick in 1697. See Arthur G. Doughty, *The Acadian Exiles: a Chronicle of the Land of Evangeline* (Toronto: Brook & Company, 1922), 17-27; Lennox, *Homelands and Empires*, 15-17; Mancke and Reid, "Elites, States, and the Imperial Contest for Acadia," 25-47.

³² Candela and Geloso, "Trade or raid: Acadian Settler and Native Americans before 1755, 550-551; Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme*, 136-137; Ferguson, *Local Government in Nova Scotia*, 4-9; Beck, *The Government of Nova Scotia*, 3-6.

immigration and settlement there. Some scholars have added that Acadian presence on the most arable land in Nova Scotia was an additional dissuasion for settlement: fertile farmland was abundant, but occupied.³³

Settlement would not occur in earnest until three decades later with the founding of Halifax, in part as direct response to the French threat from the Fortress of Louisbourg on Île Royale, which had been a focal point of King George's War between 1744 and 1748 and was returned to the French under the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle at the end of the conflict.³⁴ The decision to establish Halifax marks a change in British attitudes towards Nova Scotia from the period between 1710 and 1749: it demonstrates that Britain saw value in protecting their interests in Nova Scotia and that it was willing to fund a large scale settlement project in the region despite the conflict and tensions there.³⁵ By contrast, the 1710 to 1749 period in Nova Scotia was defined by the slow growth of a small British colonial governmental presence with minimal imperial or martial support among a predominantly Acadian and Mi'kmaq population used to governing themselves.³⁶ Within this context, the 1710 to 1720 period within Acadia and Nova

³³ Faragher, 125-150; Wynn, "Late Eighteenth-Century Agriculture on the Bay of Fundy Marshlands," *Acadiensis* 8, no. 2 (1979): 80-81; Graeme Wynn, "A Province Too Much Dependent on New England," *The Canadian Geographer* 31, no. 2 (1987): 99. See John G. Reid, "Pax Britannica or Pax Indigena? Planter Nova Scotia (1760-1782) and Competing Strategies for Pacification," *The Canadian Historical Review* 85, no. 4 (2004): 1-14 for a discussion of agriculture as a tool of empire.

³⁴ Beck, 6; Faragher, 244-249; Wynn, "A Province Too Much Dependent on New England," 98.

³⁵ Faragher, 245-278; Ferguson, 5; Beck, 9. See John Grenier, *The Far Reaches of Empire: War in Nova Scotia, 1710-1760* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press: 2008) for detailed discussion of King George's War. It has been covered extensively by many scholars and will not be discussed further here.

³⁶ Candela and Geloso, "Trade or Raid," 4-5; Beck, 3; Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme*; Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*; Kennedy, *Something of a Peasant Paradise?: Comparing Rural Societies in Acadie and the Loudunais*, 92.

Scotia was marked by conquest, imperial transition and the basic British fight to establish a framework for governance and stability.³⁷

Perhaps as a result of the dichotomy described above, extant scholarly works that address Nova Scotia during the eighteenth century tend to treat the 1710 to 1749 period as distinct from the period after 1749, with very few sources focusing strictly on the transitional conquest era between 1710 and 1720. Many sources identify 1755—the year the grand *dérangement* began — as a tipping point between the two British regimes in Nova Scotia³⁸, but the changes that came with the establishment of Halifax seem to be universally accepted as the true point at which the regime’s tone changed. Most scholarly sources offer a scattered evaluation of the people groups present in Nova Scotia at the time, focusing their discussions on dominant cultural and geopolitical influences without addressing the totality of the influences people groups living in Nova Scotia wielded and their interrelatedness. At times, sources evaluate the relationships between Mi’kmaq, Acadians, and Britons as though each people group interacted with the other groups in a vacuum, producing many valid—but vastly different—narratives of this period that reflect the experiences of the people group they focus on most clearly.

³⁷ Maurice Basque, “The Third Acadia: Political Adaptation and Societal Change,” in Reid et al, *The “Conquest” of Acadia, 1710: Imperial, Colonial, and Aboriginal Constructions*, 155-177; Elizabeth Mancke, “Imperial Transitions,” in Reid et al, *The “Conquest” of Acadia, 1710: Imperial, Colonial, and Aboriginal Constructions*, 178-202; and, Barry Moody, “Making a British Nova Scotia,” in Reid et al, *The “Conquest” of Acadia, 1710: Imperial, Colonial, and Aboriginal Constructions*, 127-154.

³⁸ The grand *dérangement* has received significant attention from historians and will not be discussed in detail in this paper, save for its relationship to agricultural evolution. See Griffiths, *The Acadian Deportation: Deliberate Perfidy or Cruel Necessity?* and Faragher, *Great and Noble Scheme* for in-depth examinations of subject.

Prior to the 1970s, narratives of conquest and imperial transition focused heavily on the conquest and its immediate aftermath either (1) as a strategic event in the broader conquest of Canada;³⁹ (2) as a defining moment the Acadian people in which their culture and agriculture were tested, but simple pastoral values persisted;⁴⁰ or (3) as a consolidation of New England's influence in the New World, with Acadia or Nova Scotia as its outpost.⁴¹ After the 1970s, studies of the conquest of Acadia began to explore changes prompted by the events of 1710, creating fresh perspectives on the local and global impacts of imperial transitions as Nova Scotia emerged from conquered Acadia. As such, demographic challenges, socioeconomic issues, and the political allegiances within Mi'kmaq'ki, Acadia and Nova Scotia began to contextualize the period's geopolitical issues and colonial conflicts, offering new challenges to old narratives that had assumed the conquest of Acadia was a moment within a larger chain of events rather than the starting point of an independent chain of events.

Contextualizing Nova Scotia's role in geopolitical issues and colonial conflicts during this period was truly an exercise in understanding how Acadians, Britons, and indigenous peoples in the region interacted with demographics, economics, and politics. Between the 1970s and 1990s, various scholars established the salience of Nova Scotia's demographic and socioeconomic landscapes, arguing that—for Acadians—a lack of immigration and barriers to accessing religious orders during the conquest period forced degrees of insularity and illiteracy in Nova Scotia, but also saw geographic mobility and political individualism based on an

³⁹ Herbert L. Osgoode, *American Colonies in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. I. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1930).

⁴⁰ Clark, *Acadia: The Geography of Early Nova Scotia to 1760*.

⁴¹ John Bartlett Brebner, *New England's Outpost: Acadia Before the Conquest of Canada* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1927).

existing commercial economy remain relatively unchanged.⁴² In 1970, one study highlighted the migration of Acadians to the French colony at Île Royale in accordance with the Treaty of Utrecht's articles as an example of unhindered geographic mobility,⁴³ although more recent studies have noted that most Acadians voluntarily remained in Nova Scotia due to the availability of fertile and productive agricultural land there.⁴⁴

Naomi Griffiths' numerous works, published between 1969 and 2005, offer a well-rounded foundation upon which to understand Acadian roles in Nova Scotia's history during the conquest era and later. Griffiths recognizes demographic and economic continuities within Nova Scotia, particularly with regard to Acadian agriculture, but also highlights that Acadians made political choices that directed their identity as a people group during this period. In 1969, Griffiths made her debut in Acadian history, discussing pertinent historical details regarding the Acadian deportation and its aftermath to demonstrate that the event must be viewed within the context of both British and French imperialism at the time it occurred.⁴⁵ In 1973, she offered a preliminary exploration of the cultural, political, and economic elements of Acadian social

⁴² Leslie P. Choquette, *Frenchmen Into Peasants!: Modernity and Tradition in the Peopling of French Canada* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1997); Gisa I. Hynes, "Some Aspects of the Demography of Port Royal, 1650-1755," *Acadiensis* 3, no. 1 (October 1, 1973): 3-17; Bernard Pothier, "Acadian Emigration to Ile Royale After the Conquest of Acadia," *Social History / Histoire Sociale*, no. 6 (November 1, 1970): 116-131

⁴³ Pothier, "Acadian Emigration to Ile Royale After the Conquest of Acadia."

⁴⁴ Basque, "The Third Acadia: Political Adaptation and Societal Change," 161-165.

⁴⁵ Griffiths, *The Acadian Deportation*. Notably, Griffiths has been criticized for the inherently judgmental tone of her book and the adjectives employed in its title, with Richard Bienvenu of the University of Missouri implying that the title exemplified the problematic value-based historical assessment that "bedevilled" the story of the grand dérangement "from the beginning" on page 357 of his review of Geoffrey Plank's much more recent book *An Unsettled Conquest*. See Richard Bienvenu, review of *An Unsettled Conquest: The British Campaign Against the Peoples of Acadia*, by Geoffrey Plank, *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 44, no. 3 (2003): 356-358 for the full review.

development, arguing that Acadians were uncertain of the permanency of the British conquest and governance of Nova Scotia despite the Treaty of Utrecht because prior conquests of Acadia had been undone by military or diplomatic means. As such, Griffiths argued that, by 1717, the Acadians adopted a neutral stance when dealing with competing French and British governments in and around Nova Scotia as a direct response to the conquest of 1710, which was in keeping with a history of Acadian pragmatism as people on the periphery of the French empire.⁴⁶

Griffiths expanded on related themes between 1982 and 1993, arguing that the conquest of 1710 altered the circumstances of life for Acadians, transforming them into a borderland people between the French and British empires. As a borderland people, Acadians were determined to remain neutral in conflict between the two groups, notwithstanding focused British efforts to achieve an unconditional oath of allegiance to the British crown from the Acadians.⁴⁷ Importantly, in 1992 Griffiths published a collection of four lectures that analyzed the period between 1686 and 1784 and offered a strong challenge to earlier assessments of the conquest era as a moment that had reinforced the pastoral values of Acadia. While Griffiths saw Acadian agriculture as a key component of the group's economy and culture, she argued that the conquest era challenged Acadian identity to change as they became a borderland people, forcing them to evolve as a demographically self-generating, economically self-sufficient, and politically interconnected society contending with North American and European realities, rather than as the

⁴⁶ Naomi E.S. Griffiths, *The Acadians: Creation of a People*, (Toronto, New York, McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1973), 19-23.

⁴⁷ Naomi E.S. Griffiths, "Longfellow's *Evangeline*: The Birth and Acceptance of a Legend," *Acadiensis* 11, no. 2 (Spring 1982): 28-41; Naomi E.S. Griffiths, "The Golden Age: Acadian Life, 1713-1748," *Histoire sociale / Social History* 17, no. 33 (May 1984): 21-34; Griffiths, *Contexts of Acadian History*; Naomi E.S. Griffiths, "Acadian Identity: The Creation and Re-creation of Community," *Dalhousie Review* 73, no. 3 (1993): 325-349;

isolated, united, farming society often described in ethnocentric accounts of Acadian history written prior to the 1970s.⁴⁸

In 2005, Griffiths utilized archival materials from Europe and the Canadian Maritime provinces to address themes regarding development of Acadian identity that underlay her previous works, bringing them together to answer questions she had introduced throughout her career. Ultimately, Griffiths argued that Acadian identity prior to 1755 was shaped by Acadians' position as a border people who relied on independently developed trade and political relations with local indigenous populations and New England, in addition to agriculture, to achieve colonial success, rather than depending on the governance and support from imperial France or Britain.⁴⁹ For Griffiths then, the conquest period introduced political subtleties that fostered continuities and discontinuities in Acadian communities and lifestyles in Nova Scotia, suggesting that its conquest spurred new realities and narratives for people there rather than merely constituting a moment within larger geopolitical trajectories involving multiple empires over decades and centuries.

In 2004, a collection of essays edited by John Reid, Maurice Basque, Elizabeth Mancke, Barry Moody, Geoffrey Plan, and William Wicken attempted to fill gaps in narratives of the conquest era by addressing the layered existence of Mi'kmaq'ki, Acadia, and Nova Scotia during the period, focusing on moments when those lands and their people groups overlapped and

⁴⁸ Griffiths, *Contexts of Acadian History*. The four lectures Griffiths includes provide an accessible and chronological entry-point into her study of Acadian history, and include: (1) The 1680s: Settlement Achieved; (2) the 1730s: Identity Established; (3) 1748-1755: Community Devastated; (4) 1755-1785: Exile Surmounted. Notably, elements of Griffiths argument in this book are repeated in Griffiths, "Acadian Identity: The Creation and Re-creation of Community." *Dalhousie Review* 73, no. 3 (1993): 330-349, albeit in a far more truncated fashion.

⁴⁹ Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*.

interacted. Throughout their study, Reid et al contended that any analysis of the conquest era in Acadia and Nova Scotia must examine a constant, three-way narrative between Indigenous peoples, Acadians, and Britons as they negotiated and renegotiated their relationships based on their goals within the shifting geopolitical realities of North America itself. While earlier studies of the conquest focused on the broader geopolitical issues and colonial conflicts of the North Atlantic throughout the eighteenth century, Reid et al convincingly demonstrate that holistically examining and juxtaposing people groups' experiences of the conquest era offers new avenues to explore the history of the North Atlantic during the early eighteenth century.

Scholars have extensively examined the allegiances of people groups in Nova Scotia beginning with its conquest in 1710, with recent studies attempting to understand the way in which each group's goals regarding allegiance influenced their negotiations and policies in Nova Scotia. Generally, scholars agree that the British government expected an unconditional oath of allegiance from the Acadians as a matter of course after Acadia was ceded to them under the Treaty of Utrecht, which would have mitigated threats the Acadian population could have posed to British authorities as a Catholic, French-speaking people group in a British colony that was located geographically near French colonies, particularly given ongoing geopolitical tensions and imperial rivalries between the French and the British.⁵⁰ From an Acadian perspective, it did not make sense to allege themselves to the British crown when past experience had demonstrated that imperial control of Nova Scotia was normally transient.⁵¹ When Acadia had first been conquered in 1710, only 54 Acadian families located near Port Royal had sworn an oath to the

⁵⁰ Maurice Basque, "The Third Acadia," 160-161; Faragher, 139-140.

⁵¹ Faragher, 140-145, 148-149.

British crown, making themselves targets of animosity from the vast majority of Acadians who had refused to do so.⁵²

In 2004, Basque argued that the death of Queen Anne of England in 1714 forced the issue of allegiance into the spotlight as it was customary for all British subjects to swear allegiance to the new monarch upon their accession to the throne. After the Queen's death, it was normal for British subjects to provide an unconditional oath of allegiance to the new British monarch, King George I, to recognize his rule and assert loyalty to him, pushing the question of the oath in Nova Scotia into focus. Swearing such an oath could have seen the Acadians called up as part of a British militia to participate in conflicts with neighbouring French powers or indigenous groups, threatening the relationships that they maintained as a borderland people in Nova Scotia. Divided on the question of allegiance, Basque argues that most Acadian communities sought to limit internal and external discord by recognizing British control of Nova Scotia in 1715 and offering their neutrality in any future conflicts between the French and British in 1717. In attempting to negotiate their oath of allegiance to the British crown, Basque argues that the Acadians became the first Euro-american group to exercise agency over their status as British subjects, suggesting that allegiance was a mutable concept for Acadians in Nova Scotia necessitated by borderland politics and geopolitics.⁵³

While Griffiths' long-standing argument is that the Acadians adopted and advocated for neutrality beginning in 1717,⁵⁴ she developed her position in 2005 to add that neutrality was a

⁵² Basque, "The Third Acadia," 166.

⁵³ Basque, "The Third Acadia," 166-171.

⁵⁴ Naomi E.S. Griffiths, *The Acadians: Creation of a People*, (Toronto, New York, McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1973), 19-23.

long-standing Acadian tradition beginning in 1660 when French alliances with the Mi'kmaq ensured that it would be politically and economically difficult for Acadians—who desired positive trade relationships with the Mi'kmaq—to participate in war against the French without jeopardizing a beneficial relationship with the Mi'kmaq.⁵⁵ For Griffiths, the Acadians' pragmatic inclination towards neutrality in conflict naturally evolved into a believed right to self-determination and an expectation that British authorities would accept their neutrality rather than demand an unconditional oath of allegiance. This was based on the self-formed sociocultural belief that Acadians were rightful inhabitants of the land they inhabited as their homeland rather than negotiable settler assets within an empire.⁵⁶ In Griffiths' view, Acadian success in negotiating oaths of neutrality or conditional allegiance with the British government in Nova Scotia cemented neutrality as a core component of Acadian identity and self-determination which confirmed their salience and legitimacy within Nova Scotia.⁵⁷

In 2005, John Mack Faragher added that British non-acquiescence to Acadian neutrality after 1717 was founded in a policy of winning the Acadians over by degrees, arguing that British authorities planned to achieve an unconditional oath of allegiance slowly in order to avoid inflaming imperial tensions by pushing the Acadians towards nearby French authorities who had begun to build up their settlement at Louisbourg on Île Royale. Instead, of forcing the issue, Faragher argues that the British government chose to negotiate and renegotiate various oaths of allegiance with the Acadians until 1730, when the Governor of Nova Scotia finally conceded to

⁵⁵ Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 164. Basque, "The Third Acadia," 169 makes a similar argument.

⁵⁶ Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 260-268.

⁵⁷ Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 417.

Acadian requests and provided them with a verbal agreement that they would not need to bear arms in imperial conflict in exchange for an oath of allegiance to the British crown.⁵⁸ In her 2019 PhD dissertation, Carol Anne Blasi added to discussions regarding the oaths of allegiance using a legal-historical approach to evaluate Acadian land tenure and French seigneurialism in agricultural settlements in Acadia and Nova Scotia between 1690 and 1755. Building on Faragher's concept of winning the Acadians' allegiance by degrees through the negotiation and renegotiation of terms of allegiance, Blasi argued that the British government tied land ownership and land use to allegiance in 1729, suggesting that land ownership and land use were important enough issues within Nova Scotia that British perspectives viewed them as carrot with which to incentivize Acadians to provide an unconditional oath of allegiance to the British crown.⁵⁹

Recently, scholars have begun to raise questions about the importance of agricultural policy and regulations in relationship to people group interactions in eighteenth century Nova Scotia. In particular, Christopher Hodson's 2012 book weaves the stories of Mi'kmaq, Acadians, and Britons together to illuminate how their sociopolitical and socioeconomic interactions culminated in the grand *dérangement*.⁶⁰ In contextualizing his exploration, Hodson notes that the British made aggressive policy decisions to "keep Acadians' grain, cattle, and fish from turning up in French markets and mouths instead of British ones," such as reducing the amount of grain families were allowed to possess to a subsistence level in 1720, with surplus grain controlled at a

⁵⁸ Faragher, 151-178. Also see Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 305.

⁵⁹ Carol Anne Blasi "Land Tenure in Acadian Agricultural Settlements, 1604-1755: Cultural Retention and the Emergence of Custom" (PhD diss., University of Maine, 2019), 218-220.

⁶⁰ Christopher Hodson, *The Acadian Diaspora: An Eighteenth-Century History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 15-46.

central granary for distribution to those in need of it—including Nova Scotia’s indigenous populations—at the government’s discretion.⁶¹ Hodson briefly argues that British authorities in Nova Scotia intentionally made “Acadians dependent on British institutions while narrowing their economic options to exclude everything but the orderly cultivation and transport of grain along the Bay of Fundy,” by limiting options for the export of agricultural goods and livestock and by establishing “themselves as the arbitrators of Acadian land disputes.”⁶² While these observations are rich and suggest that food security and agriculture played an important role in the early governance of Nova Scotia, Hodson does not explore them in any detail.

Extant scholarly sources do not provide in depth examinations of how geopolitics and people group interactions in Nova Scotia influenced the introduction of agricultural policies by the British government meant to ensure food security and increase the power they held in the region. Literature regarding conquest of Acadia provides sufficient context to explore food security and agriculture as foundational issues during the 1710 to 1720 period in Acadia; however, it fails to question the role food security played in Nova Scotia despite its obvious involvement in how Acadians, Britons, and indigenous peoples in Nova Scotia navigated demographics, economics, and politics during the conquest era. Invariably, scholars have brushed up against issues of food security in their treatments of the conquest period, but have emphasized more obviously politically and historically charged geopolitical conflicts in the North Atlantic region without analyzing the ways in which food security fed the British governance of Nova Scotia, the creation of policy, and the regulation of agriculture—thereby

⁶¹ Hodson, *The Acadian Diaspora: An Eighteenth-Century History*, 35.

⁶² Hodson, *The Acadian Diaspora*, 36.

underlying and interacting with the very geopolitical conflicts and colonial issues that they examine. This study will place the focus on food security and agriculture in Nova Scotia, assessing the conquest era as a period that revolved around the basic need for sustenance amidst demographic, economic, and political challenges that created fears of food insecurity above all else.

Chapter Two

Setting the Stage for New Agricultural Policy: Problems with Acadian Liberty to Leave Nova Scotia, Agricultural Potential, and the Need for Food Security

Given the rootedness of Acadian agriculture in Nova Scotia and the demographic reality that the majority of the colony's population were Acadian or indigenous, early debates around administering Nova Scotia addressed basic issues of sustenance and sustainability as French and British governments grappled with the new realities spelled out by the 1713 Treaty of Utrecht. In the North Atlantic region, such debates centred around concern over food security, particularly with regard to the Treaty of Utrecht's potential to threaten food security in Nova Scotia should its main agricultural producer—the Acadians—choose to depart the newly British colony for the nearby French colony of Île Royale. As such, concerns regarding food security in Nova Scotia directed British policy in applying the Treaty of Utrecht, encouraging them to retain Nova Scotia's Acadian population and causing ripple effects that would cement agriculture as a cornerstone of Nova Scotia's development, subsistence, and efficacy as a colony in British thought, forcing its agricultural industry and labourers into the limelight.

The Fourteenth Article of the Treaty of Utrecht

A debate sprang up in 1714 concerning the Treaty of Utrecht's fourteenth article, which:

[...] expressly provided that in all the said places and colonies to be yielded and restored by the most Christian King, in pursuance of this treaty, the subjects of the said king may have liberty to remove themselves within a year to any other place, as they shall think fit, together with all their moveable effects. But those who are willing to remain there, and to be subject to the kingdom of Great Britain, are to enjoy the free exercise of their religion,

according to the usage of the church of Rome as far as the laws of Great Britain do allow the same.⁶³

Letters between French ministers, English lords, and Nova Scotia's freshly minted military administration voyaged across the English Channel and Atlantic Ocean as authorities sought to ensure the best possible outcomes for their respective empires. The men were not bothered with the religious protections proscribed by the treaty's fourteenth article—which was perhaps the more obvious of the concerns it presented⁶⁴—but rather with protecting and growing their agricultural industries.

The French Minister of Marine, Monsieur de Pontchartrain began the debate with a letter to Monsieur d'Iberville—the French Ambassador to the British Court—on 11 November 1714:⁶⁵ he had made a report to the French King of news from Monsieur Soubras, the commissary at the newly established French settlement on Île Royale,⁶⁶ that Acadians—who were frequent trading partners of the French—in Nova Scotia were not being afforded the rights offered to them under the Treaty of Utrecht. Of particular alarm, de Pontchartrain and Soubras claimed that the

⁶³ “Treaty of peace and friendship between the most serene and most potent princess Anne, by the Grace of God, Queen of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, and the most serene and most potent prince Lewis XIV the Most Christian King, concluded at Utrecht 31/11 day of March/ April 1713,” 31 March 1713 and 11 April 1713, in John Almon, ed., *A Collection of All the Treaties of Peace, Alliance, and Commerce, Between Great-Britain and Other Powers, from the Revolution in 1688, to 1771* (J. Almon, London, 1772) (hereafter Almon, *Collection*), 138.

⁶⁴ Many British laws severely curtailed the rights and freedoms of practicing Catholics, calling into question the usefulness of the Acadians' religious freedoms being protected under the Treaty of Utrecht's fourteenth article, or the extent to which they truly were protected. Faragher, 136-137.

⁶⁵ For more information regarding d'Iberville, see Ursula Haskins Gonthier, *Montesquieu and England: Enlightened Exchanges, 1689-1755* (Routledge Taylor and Francis Group: London, 2016), 63.

⁶⁶ Present day Cape Breton Island. Île Royale was surrendered to the British under the Treaty of Paris in 1763 at the conclusion of the Seven Years War.

Acadians had been referred to the Court at London “upon requiring the term of one year, according to the 14 Artle. in the Treaty of Utrecht, to remain without molestation upon their Estates [...]”⁶⁷ The Acadians’ other requests, which included transporting their corn and cattle, building vessels, carrying off their moveable effects, receiving “from the French tackle and other necessaries,” were also referred to London. If the Acadians were unable to leave Nova Scotia under the terms they requested, de Pontchartrain and Soubras were concerned that their potential to aid nearby French colonial initiatives in Île Royale would be compromised.⁶⁸ However, despite the fact that the fourteenth article of the Treaty of Utrecht had entered into force as a component of accepted international law, the British government in Nova Scotia was unwilling to apply its conditions without clear direction from London, which it had not received by November of 1714,⁶⁹ especially given the potential for Acadians to strengthen the French settlement in Île Royale.⁷⁰

In the event that the British government did allow the Acadians a term of one year to remain on their land before leaving Nova Scotia with their possessions, de Pontchartrain was also concerned by the British response to another related request the Acadians put to the British

⁶⁷ Mons. de Pontchartrain, Minister of Marine at Paris, to Mons. D’Iberville, 11 Nov 1714, in *Selections From the Public Documents of the Province of Nova Scotia: Papers Relating to the Acadian French, 1714-1755*, Thomas B. Akins, ed. (Halifax: Charles Annand, 1869) (hereafter Akins, *Selections*), 4. For another example of Acadian concerns with the British reduction of Nova Scotia, see Jean Beliveau et al., “Petition des Acadiens a Messrs les Malouins pour obtenir la protection du Roy de France,” 10 Oct 1714, 2172844, reel 10216, image 217-220, Amérique septentrionale, Archives des Colonies, Dépôt des fortifications des colonies, 1704-1757, Public Archives Canada, Ottawa, Canada (hereafter Amérique septentrionale: C-10216).

⁶⁸ Faragher, 140-141; Mons. de Pontchartrain, Minister of Marine at Paris, to Mons. D’Iberville, 11 Nov 1714, in Akins, *Selections*, 4.

⁶⁹ Mons. de Pontchartrain, Minister of Marine at Paris, to Mons. D’Iberville, 11 Nov 1714, in Akins, *Selections*, 4.

⁷⁰ Faragher, 140-141

asking that written orders be provided stating that Acadian inhabitants of Nova Scotia could lawfully sell their homes “and leave letters of Attorney for that purpose” upon leaving the colony.⁷¹ Colonel Nicholson—the commander of the British garrison at Annapolis Royal—promised to expedite the Acadians’ requests, but answered that “undoubted Guarantee” of Acadian ability to leave their land already existed in the form of a letter from the recently deceased British monarch Queen Anne,⁷² which was provided to the Acadians after Port Royal was surrendered to the British in 1710.⁷³ With the British aristocracy and the word of a dead monarch as the only guarantees that Acadians would be allowed to leave Nova Scotia, presumably for neighbouring French colonies where they would help build new settlements and cultivate unsettled land, de Pontchartrain requested that d’Iberville push the subject at Court to ensure that the King George of Britain issue prompt orders confirming Acadians’ rights to sell their homes and allowing them to leave Nova Scotia with their personal effects as per the Treaty of Utrecht.⁷⁴ Simply put, the Acadians with their moveable effects and money from the sale of their land and immoveable possession were an agricultural asset to settlement and economic growth that the French on Île Royale did not want to lose.

De Pontchartrain’s letter was put before King George, who had a copy sent to his Board of Trade and Plantations in order to get their opinion on the concerns it presented.⁷⁵ To provide

⁷¹ Mons. de Pontchartrain, Minister of Marine at Paris, to Mons. D’Iberville, 11 Nov 1714, in Akins, *Selections*, 4.

⁷² Mons. de Pontchartrain, Minister of Marine at Paris, to Mons. D’Iberville, 11 Nov 1714, in Akins, *Selections*, 4.

⁷³ For discussion of the letter left by Queen Anne, see Faragher, 136-137.

⁷⁴ Mons. de Pontchartrain, Minister of Marine at Paris, to Mons. D’Iberville, 11 Nov 1714, in Akins, *Selections*, 4.

⁷⁵ Charles Townshend to the Board of Trade, 15 Nov 1714, in Akins, *Selections*, 4.

an informed opinion to King George, the Board of Trade directed de Pontchartrain's letter to Colonel Samuel Vetch—who had held command over Annapolis Royal from 1710 to 1713 and served as the first British Governor of Nova Scotia during that period—for his opinion on de Pontchartain's requests based on his unique knowledge of the situation on the ground in Nova Scotia.⁷⁶ The Board of Trade was interested in six facets of the situation in Nova Scotia: (1) the number of Acadians living there; (2) the number of Acadians who would be likely to leave Nova Scotia if the British government approved their immigration to a different colony; (3) the number of families living on Île Royale and the types of support they received from the French; (4) the potential consequences in Nova Scotia if the Acadians were to immigrate to Île Royale; (5) the planned timing of the Acadians' movement out of Nova Scotia, the quantities of livestock they would likely take with them, and if families had begun to leave the colony already; and (6) the impacts of allowing the Acadians to sell their land upon leaving it.⁷⁷ In essence, the Board of Trade wanted to understand the demographic, political, and economic consequences of allowing Acadians to leave Nova Scotia along with their agricultural expertise and assets.

Vetch's response to the Board of Trade was succinct, but informative: (1) he estimated that approximately 2500 Acadians lived in Nova Scotia assuming that there were roughly 500 families with an average of five people per family; and, (2) he expressed that all but two families—those of a Mr. Allen and a Mr. Goudry, who had “liv'd in New England formerly”—had

⁷⁶ “Journal, November 1714: Journal Book Q,” in E. G. Atkinson, ed., *Journal of the Board of Trade and Plantations: Volume 2, February 1709-1715* (London: His Majesty's Stationary Office, 1925) (hereafter Atkinson, *Journal*), 571-575.

⁷⁷ “Journal, November 1714: Journal Book Q,” Atkinson, *Journal*, 571-575; Samuel Vetch to Lords of Trade, 24 November 1714, 104282, reel 9120, image 435-441, Colonial Office: Nova Scotia and Cape Breton, Original Correspondence (CO 217), Public Archives Canada, Ottawa (hereafter CO 217: C-9120).

already stated that they would leave Nova Scotia.⁷⁸ While Vetch wrote that he was unsure of the exact number of families living on Île Royale, he estimated based on “the best advices” that roughly five hundred families lived there along with a garrison of seven companies and eighteen months’ worth of provision, including ships and salt for the fishery the French were conducting from the island.⁷⁹ If Vetch’s population estimate regarding the number of Acadians in Nova Scotia was accurate and there were a similar number of settlers in Île Royale, not accounting for the French garrison there, then it can be reasonably supposed that the Board of Trade and British officials in general would have been alarmed by the prospect of knowingly doubling the settlement’s size and knowledge base regarding the region by allowing Acadians to leave Nova Scotia to rebuild their lives there.

In answer to the Board of Trade’s query regarding the consequences in Nova Scotia if most Acadians left the colony with their moveable effects Vetch offers a particularly revealing assessment of the colony’s reality as a space in colonial flux and transition. Vetch describes the two consequences he sees in adhering to the Treaty of Utrecht’s fourteenth article as follows:

First their leaving that country intirely destitute of inhabitants: There being none but French, and Indians (excepting the Garrison) settled in those parts; and as they have intermarried, with the Indians, by which ad their being of one Religion, they have a might influence upon them. So it is not to be doubted, but they will carry along with them to Cape Bretton both the Indians and their trade, Which is very considerable. And as the accession of such a number of inhabitants to Cape Bretton, will make it at once a very populous Colony; (in which the strength of all the Country’s consists) So it is to be considered, that one hundred of the French, who were born upon that continents, and are perfectly known in the woods; can march upon snowshoes; and understand the use of Birch Canoes are of more value and service than five times their number of raw men, newly come from Europe. So their skill in the Fishery, as well as the cultivating of the soil, must inevitably make that Island, by such an accession of people, and French, at

⁷⁸ Vetch to the Lords of Trade, 24 Nov 1714, image 435, CO 217: C-9120.

⁷⁹ Vetch to Lords of Trade, 24 Nov 1714, image 435-436, CO 217: C-9120.

once the most powerful colony, the French have in America. And of the greatest danger and damage to all the British Colony's as well as the universal trade of Great Britain.⁸⁰

While Vetch's arguments against adhering to the Treaty of Utrecht's fourteenth article essentially boil down to his observations that Acadians being allowed to leave Nova Scotia would: (1) weaken the colony by leaving it without inhabitants; and (2) significantly strengthen the French colony at Île Royale supposing that the Acadians immigrated there,⁸¹ his reasoning is quite nuanced.

Vetch articulated his fear that the close relationship he observed between Acadians and local indigenous peoples, many of whom were Mi'kmaq, would result in both groups quitting Nova Scotia for Île Royale, which would nearly eliminate trade in the colony. Further, Vetch worried that losing Acadian expertise regarding the land in Nova Scotia and the practices of indigenous peoples there would reduce British efficacy to rapidly establish sustainable settlements as they would need to start from scratch with newly landed European settlers. Finally, Vetch recognized that gaining Acadian skills in both the fishery and the agricultural industry would bolster the strength of Île Royale and threaten Great Britain's Atlantic colonies, while losing those skills would diminish Nova Scotia's strength and damage its trade and economy within the British Empire. Certainly then, the potential loss of Acadian agricultural expertise was a strong reason to deny Acadians' requests to leave Nova Scotia as per the Treaty

⁸⁰ Vetch to Lords of Trade, 24 Nov 1714, image 436-437, CO 217: C-9120.

⁸¹ Maurice Basque notes these concerns as general to the British colonial authorities. As Basque argues, the British recognized that Acadians leaving Nova Scotia for French colonies would bolster French strength and influence in the newly won region, influencing Vetch's decision to retain all Acadians in Nova Scotia, which Basque notes was first communicated to the Board of Trade in December 1713. See Basque, "The Third Acadia," 160-161.

of Utrecht's fourteenth article, especially given that their relations with Mi'kmaq and other indigenous groups would likely see that source of trade filter out of the colony along with them too.

Interestingly, Vetch's concerns about the closeness of relationships between the Mi'kmaq and Acadians is reflected in traditional narratives of Acadia between its settlement in 1604 and the grand dérangement in 1710. Such narratives promote a tautology of harmony, respect, and contentment as the defining characteristics of Mi'kmaq-Acadian relations based on the initial assumption that differences in the two groups agricultural systems limited conflict as they reduced competition for land and created mutually beneficial trade relationships, and that intermarriage between the two groups strengthened their relationships overtime.⁸² While it is true that Mi'kmaq cultivated gardens near fishing villages, hunted throughout Mi'kma'ki, and fished in the lowlands while Acadians farmed in the lowlands after the process of wetland reclamation,⁸³ it is also important to recognize that Mi'kmaq relied of the natural ecology of wetland regions for hunting and fishing, suggesting that the loss of such lands would have

⁸² Dickason, *Canada's First Nations: A History of Founding Peoples from Earliest Times*, 169-170; Griffiths, *Contexts of Acadian History*, 3-62; Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 259-260; Kennedy, *Something of a Peasant Paradise?*; Katie K MacLeod, "Emergence and Progression of Acadian Ethnic and Political Identities: Alliance and Land-Based Inter-peoples Relations in Early Acadia and Today," *TOTEM: The University of Western Ontario Journal of Anthropology* 23, no. 1 (2015): 55-56; Upton, *Micmacs and Colonists*, 26.

⁸³ MacLeod, "Emergence and Progression of Acadian Ethnic and Political Identities: Alliance and Land-Based Inter-peoples Relations in Early Acadia and Today," 55-56; Wicken, "Re-examining Mi'kmaq-Acadian Relations," in *Habitants et Marchands, Vingt Ans Après : Lectures de l'histoire Des XVIIe et XVIIIe Siècles Canadiens*, ed Sylvie Departie (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998) 96-97; William Wicken, *Mi'kmaq Treaties on Trial: History, Land, and Donald Marshal Junior* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 30.

created friction between the two groups.⁸⁴ Presumably, the appeal of European trade encouraged Mi'kmaq to marry Acadians, and the basic needs of an Acadian society with little aid from its imperial leadership demanded support that Mi'kmaq could offer in terms of local resource acquisition and opportunities for population growth;⁸⁵ however, there are very few records to support this assertion and some scholars argue that the Acadian population was large enough and demographically balanced enough that it would not have needed to integrate Mi'kmaq to ensure population growth.⁸⁶ Further, alliances and interactions between people groups in the north-eastern Maritimes were locally based, formed between individuals or families, and nuanced,⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Wicken, "Re-examining Mi'kmaq-Acadian Relations," 96-101. Wicken briefly notes that records indicate an understanding between Acadians and Mi'kmaq that Mi'kmaq leaders needed to grant their permission for Acadian settlement on specific land; however, Wicken's discussion regarding Mi'kmaq agency in relation to land use is centred on political tension between Mi'kmaq, Acadians, and British between 1720-1740 and does not touch on agricultural policy or practices despite the fact that those subjects are on the periphery of his discussion and intrinsically related to Acadian land use.

⁸⁵ Olive Dickason, "From 'One Nation' in the Northeast to 'New Nation' in the Northwest: A Look at the Emergence of the Metis," 22-28; Dickason, *Canada's First Nations*, 169-170; Griffiths, *Contexts of Acadian History*, 23-25, Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 37, 57, 87, 179, 259; Upton, *Micmacs and Colonists*, 16-47.

⁸⁶ Olive Dickason, "From 'One Nation' in the Northeast to 'New Nation' in the Northwest," 22-24; Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 37, 57, 87, 179; Thomas Peace, "A Reluctant Engagement: Alliances and Social Networks in Early-18th-Century Kespukwitk and Port Royal," *Acadiensis* 49, no. 1 (2020): 37-38; Wicken, "Re-examining Mi'kmaq-Acadian Relations," 94, 102-104. Notably, Mi'kmaq subsistence strategies and agricultural methods did not align with those of Acadians and vice versa, shedding further doubt on traditional scholarship's arguments regarding intermarriage: such unions would not have been valuable to the maintenance and amelioration of each people group's subsistence strategies and agricultural methods, and likely would have dissuaded each group from binding themselves to a spouse without the knowledge and skills deemed valuable within their community.

⁸⁷ Peace, "A Reluctant Engagement: Alliances and Social Networks in Early-18th-Century Kespukwitk and Port Royal," 8, 29-31; Wicken, "Re-examining Mi'kmaq-Acadian Relations," 95.

making it difficult to assert that agricultural differences and intermarriage between Mi'kmaq and Acadians were a constant harmonizing factor in Mi'kmaq-Acadian relations during the period.

Census data further challenges traditional scholarship's tautology of harmony, illuminating how Acadian population growth precipitated expansion into new farmlands and more instances of wetland reclamation over time. Mi'kmaw population growth was comparatively slow due to limiting factors such as the introduction of European diseases into the Mi'kmaw population and the instability, internal displacement, and migration that shifting imperial control of the region caused for Mi'kmaq.⁸⁸ Records indicate that Acadia's population experienced a high rate of natural growth after 1635 while Mi'kmaw population growth lagged behind in terms of percentage population increase, suggesting that opportunities for Acadian and Mi'kmaw interests to intersect would have been more limited than traditional scholarship argues.⁸⁹ For example, records of natural Acadian population growth at Port Royal—later Annapolis Royal—indicate that it experienced a high annual rate of population growth after it

⁸⁸ Andrew Hill Clark, *The Geography of Early Nova Scotia to 1760*, 201-224; Virginia Miller, "Aboriginal Micmac Population: A Review of the Evidence," *Ethnohistory* 23 (1976): 117-129; Peace, *A Reluctant Engagement*, 21-28; John Reid, "Pax Britannica or Pax Indigena? Planter Nova Scotia (1760-1782) and Competing Strategies for Pacification," 4; Wicken, "Re-examining Mi'kmaq-Acadian Relations," 96, 100-108. On page 4 of his article, John Reid provides a fantastic summary of populations' growth, distribution, and subsistence activities in Nova Scotia, stating that: "The Acadians, numbering some 2000 at the time of the conquests and rapidly increasing; primarily occupied the Fundy marshlands, while the Aboriginal nations utilized the much larger expanses of territory that continued to support a hunting, gathering, and fishing economy. The Aboriginal population of perhaps 4000 at the time of conquest was numerically overtaken by the Acadians about 1720. The 400 or so British, by contrast, were confined to an enclave in Annapolis Royal, the site of European enclaves of various nationalities (French, Scottish, English) that had existed with only brief intermissions since 1605." Reid notes that he excluded indigenous groups in southwestern Nova Scotia from his population estimates, meaning that most of the indigenous population he includes would have been Mi'kmaq.

⁸⁹ Peace, 21-28; Wicken, "Re-examining Mi'kmaq-Acadian Relations," 95-101.

was established in 1605, with a growth rate of 3.75 percent per year between 1671 and 1755.⁹⁰ According to Thomas Peace's recent evaluation of census data, the Acadian population at Port Royal nearly doubled between 1703 and 1714, while the Mi'kmaw population located nearby at Tewopskik experienced a decrease in population by four people between 1708 and 1722.⁹¹ Given this, it seems likely that the gap between Acadian interests as a growing sedentary marshland agricultural society and Mi'kmaq interests as a hunting and fishing society widened over time rather than shrank.

Thus, while Vetch's specific concerns with regard to the amicable nature of Mi'kmaq-Acadian relations given their being "intermarried [... and] of one Religion" reflect his understanding of the region, they do not accurately depict the situation between the two people groups or demonstrably prove that Acadians leaving Nova Scotia would have reduced the colony's trade. That said, his general concerns that Acadians being allowed to leave Nova Scotia would weaken the colony by leaving it without inhabitants and significantly strengthen the French colony at Île Royale (supposing that the Acadians immigrated there), stand, particularly given their expertise in Nova Scotia's fishery and agricultural industry.

Vetch was also deeply concerned about ensuring Nova Scotia's agricultural stability, which is more obvious in his next argument against the Acadians leaving Nova Scotia in accordance with the treaty. Vetch informed the Board of Trade that some Acadians with "no very great substance" had already left Nova Scotia during the summer, but that the rest planned to leave the following summer after the harvest was finished.⁹² If allowed to leave with their

⁹⁰ Wicken, "Re-examining Mi'kmaq-Acadian Relations," 95-97.

⁹¹ Peace, 28.

⁹² Vetch to Lords of Trade, 24 Nov 1714, image 438, CO 217: C-9120.

livestock, the Acadians would—in Vetch’s estimation—take 5000 black cattle and many sheep and hogs, making up nearly all of the livestock in the colony. As Vetch noted, the consequences of such a reality are obvious: first, Nova Scotia would be left without cattle and other mainstays of European agriculture, which would “reduce it to its primitive state;” and, second, cattle and other livestock would need to be shipped into Nova Scotia, likely from New England as it was the closest British colony to Nova Scotia. Vetch estimated that the cost for this would amount to “above fforty thousand pounds besides the long time it will require to Stock that Country [...] and many other disadvantages too long to relate here; but the vast Advantages Accrewing to the ffrrench from thence are great.”⁹³ While Vetch was concerned by the cost of replenishing Nova Scotia’s livestock population, he was also alarmed by the potential naturalization of an already cultivated environment: removing elements of European agriculture such as livestock and Acadian agricultural expertise would signal a movement away from civilization back towards an entirely primitive, unsettled environment that had not existed when the land composing Nova Scotia was ceded to Britain under the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713.⁹⁴ In that case, allowing Acadian

⁹³ Vetch to Lords of Trade, 24 Nov 1714, image 439, CO 217: C-9120.

⁹⁴ For further reading regarding agriculture as a tool of empire, see John Reid, “Pax Britannica or Pax Indigena?” Also see Jennifer Reid, *Myth, Symbol, and Colonial Encounter: British and Mi’kmaq in Acadia, 1700-1867*, (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1995) 39-42. Jennifer Reid relates British fears of an unsettled Acadia to their perceptions of Indigenous peoples in the region, arguing “that for the colonial British, the Mi’kmaq were essentially part of the wilderness and were possessed of the same qualities attributed to ‘wild’ Acadia,” which needed to be, cultivated, tamed, and civilized in accordance with European images. Advancements in cultivating peninsular Nova Scotia represented colonial progress to the British. Accordingly, civilizing indigenous populations in Nova Scotia would involve ensuring that they adopted “agricultural modes of subsistence,” an ostensible goal of the Nova Scotian government that was generally abandoned in favour of dissolving indigenous cultures until the nineteenth century.

agriculture to trickle out of Nova Scotia would not only harm its economy, but also reduce its environment to a primitive, unsettled, and uncivilized state.

Vetch's response to the Board of Trade's final concern about allowing Acadians to sell their property in Nova Scotia was firm and unfaltering: to do so would go against the precedent set in every other British colony of enticing settlers by providing them with free land grants; it would be a breach of public faith that the colony was the property of the British; and it would be legally unnecessary as the Treaty of Utrecht did not include a clause entitling any person in Nova Scotia to such a privilege. Vetch also pointed out that, according to his understanding of the Treaty of Utrecht, "the French inhabitants, are allowed either to remove if they designed it, or at least to demand the same, in a year's time after the ratification of the treaty, neither of which was done."⁹⁵ While Vetch's interpretation of the Treaty of Utrecht is not entirely factual given that it actually guaranteed that all French subjects left in any territory ceded to another government would "have liberty to remove themselves within a year [of the treaty's ratification] to any other place, as they shall think fit, together with all their moveable effects,"⁹⁶ he was correct that the Acadians' request to leave Nova Scotia had—at the point of his writing—surpassed the one-year mark during which they had possessed a legal right to leave the colony with their moveable effects. There was no legal obligation to allow the Acadians to leave as they had requested, but

⁹⁵ Vetch to Lords of Trade, 24 Nov 1714, image 440-441, CO 217: C-9120.

⁹⁶ "Treaty of peace and friendship between the most serene and most potent princess Anne, by the Grace of God, Queen of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, and the most serene and most potent prince Lewis XIV the Most Christian King, concluded at Utrecht 31/11 day of March/ April 1713," 31 Mar 1713 and 11 Apr 1713, in Almon, *Collection*, 138.

many reasons to retain their agricultural labour, expertise, and presence in Nova Scotia whether the Acadians liked it or not.⁹⁷

Perspectives on the Ground

When Vetch penned his response to the Board of Trade, one of his major concerns—that Acadian migration out of Nova Scotia would deplete the livestock population there—was already becoming a reality. In August of 1714, three months before de Pontchartrain wrote to d’Iberville, Soubras, the commissary who alerted de Pontchartrain to the Acadians’ concerns, arrived in Île Royale to find that two men—one Sieurs de la Ronde and one Captain de Pensens—had sailed to Nova Scotia on two ships to “obtain from the Governor, Mr. Nicholson, a free liberty [for the Acadians] to retire with their cattle and corn” to Île Royale.⁹⁸ While there, Governor Nicholson allowed the men to gather many Acadians and entreat them to leave Nova Scotia for Île Royale on the ships they had with them, along with their moveable effects, a promise of twelve months’ worth of provisions supplied by the French king, and a guarantee that any trade they carried out on Île Royale would be duty-free for ten years.⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Debate existed within British circles at the time as to whether the Acadians truly wanted to leave Nova Scotia or not, with the British claiming that the French government had coerced Acadians to quit the colony by threatening to treat them as rebels if they remained. This claim was based on the eye witness account of one Mr. Fergusson, which was communicated to the Board of Trade by Colonel Vetch. See “Journal, November 1714: Journal Book Q,” in Atkinson, *Journal*, 571-575 and “Journal, December 1714: Journal Book Q,” in Atkinson, *Journal*, 575-582.

⁹⁸ Mons. de Pontchartrain, Minister of Marine at Paris, to Mons. D’Iberville, 11 Nov 1714, in Akins, *Selections*, 4.

⁹⁹ Monsieur de la Ronde and Monsieur de Pensens, account of events while in Nova Scotia, 19 August 1714, image 200-203, *Amérique septentrionale*: C-10216.

Between August and September, 20 families—five of whom were from Mines, Acadia’s most agriculturally productive region—left Nova Scotia for Île Royale, taking with them a recorded total of 24 sheep, three young oxen, one calf, one bull, and one pig in addition to three barrels of peas, three barrels of flour, three bushels of shallots, twenty pounds of butter, and four barrels of grain. On behalf of the families from Mines, the ships also carried 112 bushels of wheat, 60 bushels of peas, fourteen barrels of salted beef, and nine trunks.¹⁰⁰ Clearly, some Acadians were willing to leave Nova Scotia with their moveable effects to start a new life back in French territory.¹⁰¹ If this trend continued in high numbers throughout 1714 and afterwards, it is conceivable that losing agricultural assets such as livestock and Acadian knowledge regarding the most marshland agricultural methods would have significantly reduced Nova Scotia’s potential to sustain its new British population in addition to leaving vast swathes of the colony’s land unsettled and unproductive from a European perspective.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ “Liste des Effects qu’on a embarqué sure le Batteau du Roy le St. Louis pour L’Isle Royale,” 6 September 1714, image 390, CO 217: C-9120; “Liste des habitants des Mines qui ont demandé passage pour L’Isle Royale et qui sembarquent sur le Batteau du Roy le St. Louis,” 6 September 1714, image 389, CO 217: C-9120; Hibbert Newton, “List of Acadians that shipped themselves and their effects to Îsle Royale onboard the sloop Marie Joseph,” 18 August 1714, image 316-317, CO 217: C-9120.

¹⁰¹ Basque argues that those who chose to leave Nova Scotia, primarily carpenters, shipbuilders, and mariners, did so because Île Royale offered them economic opportunities unmatched by their lives in Nova Scotia. That said, Basque notes that the majority of Acadian migrants to Île Royale returned to Nova Scotia and that the productive marshland agricultural system in place in Nova Scotia dissuaded most Acadian farmers—who the French had hoped to attract—from migrating to Île Royale in the first place. See Basque, “The Third Acadia,” 161-165.

¹⁰² Interestingly, Barry Moody notes that 71 percent of the Acadians who chose to leave Nova Scotia came from the Annapolis region, with many of those Acadian near Annapolis Royal who did not leave Nova Scotia instead migrating to areas of the colony further from British influence. As a result, the early demography of Nova Scotia saw a near complete separation between British and Acadian populations, which continued until after the grand dérangement in 1755. See Moody, “Making a British Nova Scotia,” 128-130.

Concerns regarding instability, uncertainty, and resources were also reflected in Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia Thomas Caulfeild's arguments for retaining the Acadians in Nova Scotia, which he provided to the British Board of Trade and Plantations.¹⁰³ In 1715, Caulfeild's thoughts on the matter of the Acadians were pragmatically divided based on three broad issues: (1) British reliance on Acadian agricultural production for subsistence; (2) the potential growth of Nova Scotia's existing agricultural industry if Acadians remained; and (3) British need to mitigate threats from Indigenous peoples, who outnumbered them.¹⁰⁴ Caulfeild's final argument was straightforward: he felt that the Indigenous peoples of Nova Scotia were the "worst of enemies" to British settlement in Nova Scotia as they might make "insults" to the English families that might come to the colony, which "the french by their staying will in great measure ward off, for their own sakes."¹⁰⁵ Regardless, Caulfeild was cognizant of the need to create good relations with Indigenous peoples in Nova Scotia, suggesting that increasing opportunities for contact with them by establishing a King's Magazine in Annapolis Royal might improve trade in the colony and win their support as he and his garrison worked to transition the region to stable British governance.¹⁰⁶ In this sense, Caulfeild's advocacy for retaining Acadians

¹⁰³ Thomas Caulfeild served as the Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia from 1714 to 1717 under Governor Nicholson, with whom he had significant problems. Caulfeild was critical of Nicholson's treatment of Acadians near Annapolis Royal, his general absence from the colony in favour of Boston, his provisioning of the garrison in Annapolis Royal, and his management of the colony's funds. For examples of these criticisms, see Thomas Caulfeild to Secretary of State, 3 May 1715, in Akins, *Selections*, 7-8; Thomas Caulfeild to Board of Trade and Plantations, 1 Nov 1715, in Akins, *Selections*, 8-9; and, Thomas Caulfeild to Board of Trade and Plantations, 16 May 1716, in Akins, *Selections*, 10-11.

¹⁰⁴ Caulfeild to Secretary of State, 3 May 1715, in Akins, *Selections*, 7-8; Caulfeild to Board of Trade and Plantations, 1 Nov 1715, in Akins, *Selections*, 8-9.

¹⁰⁵ Caulfeild to Board of Trade and Plantations, 1 Nov 1715, in Akins, *Selections*, 9.

¹⁰⁶ Caulfeild to Board of Trade and Plantations, 1 Nov 1715, in Akins, *Selections*, 9.

to help mitigate threats from Indigenous peoples also left room to encourage trade and industry with Indigenous peoples, simultaneously improving relations between people groups in Nova Scotia and growing local trade networks for non-agricultural goods that Acadians normally did not produce.

Caulfeild's other arguments for retaining the Acadians in Nova Scotia were significantly more complex, in part because Caulfeild's attempts to govern the Acadians were met with little cooperation from them. First, Caulfeild could not entreat the Acadians to provide an Oath of Allegiance to the recently crowned King George or to cooperate with his government in general.¹⁰⁷ The minority of Acadians who had sworn an oath of allegiance to the British crown in the past had become targets of threats from other Acadians in the region, minimizing the willingness of most Acadians to take the oath in the following years. Further, increasing tensions between the British and Mi'kmaq between 1710 and 1720 meant that Acadians who swore an oath of allegiance were also in danger of retaliation from Mi'kmaq warriors, who might have viewed them as the enemy had they willingly taken up arms alongside the British.¹⁰⁸

Of more imminent—but related—concern, Caulfeild was struggling to obtain much needed food goods from the Acadians he was meant to govern over.¹⁰⁹ As Caulfeild bluntly informed the Board of Trade in May 1715, “[t]he unhappy circumstances of this place obliges me to acquaint you that if some other methods be not taken than what lately have been, it will be

¹⁰⁷ Basque, “The Third Acadia,” 166-168; Chris Aldrige to Governor Nicholson, 15 January 1714/15, image 543-544, CO 217: C-9120; Thomas Caulfeild to Lords of Trade, 12 January 1714/15, image 535-536, CO 217: C-9120; Caulfeild to Secretary of State, 3 May 1715, in Akins, *Selections*, 8; Faragher, 143-145.

¹⁰⁸ Basque, “The Third Acadia,” 166-168.

¹⁰⁹ Caulfeild to Secretary of State, 3 May 1715, in Akins, *Selections*, 8.

impossible for this place to subsist the ensuing winter. The French who always maintained this Garrison with corn are most of them quitting the Collony, especially att Mines the only grain plantation [...].”¹¹⁰ Without Acadian agricultural goods, Caulfeild sent a ship to New England to solicit provisions, which he purchased at great personal expense while Acadian fields provided an abundance that had been accessible to the garrison in the past.¹¹¹ In November 1715, Caulfeild also noted that the British garrison had also seen little success developing a trading relationship with nearby indigenous populations as another source for provisions, which he attributed to the fact that there was no King’s Magazine at Annapolis Royal as there had been when it had been a French Fort.¹¹² As such, he was struggling to obtain provisions on all fronts, both from the Acadians and from indigenous peoples. Still, the British garrison at Annapolis Royal needed to subsist through the winter, leaving the expense Caulfeild’s actions incurred with less value than the potential impacts of his doing nothing to provision the garrison. Presumably, it was impossible to ignore that Acadian agricultural production could have provisioned the garrison at a far lower cost had they been cooperative, keeping the Acadians’ agricultural value top of mind.

Accordingly, while Caulfeild struggled to obtain an Oath of Allegiance from the Acadians or to persuade them to provision the garrison at Annapolis Royal, he recognized the agricultural opportunity they offered and even suggested that in “two to three years with due encouragement, we [as a colony] may be furnished with everything within ourselves” because of the existing

¹¹⁰ Caulfeild to Secretary of State, 3 May 1715, in Akins, *Selections*, 8. Notably, Faragher, 148 recognizes that the British needed Acadian goods to subsist through the winter; however, this recognition is made in passing, without further discussion, and without contextualizing this need in the broader debate about the Treaty of Utrecht’s fourteenth article.

¹¹¹ Caulfeild to Secretary of State, 3 May 1715, in Akins, *Selections*, 8.

¹¹² Thomas Caulfeild to Lords of Trade, 1 Nov 1715, image 901, CO 217: C-9120.

Acadian agricultural industry.¹¹³ Like Vetch, Caulfeild cautioned the Board of Trade that the Acadian population was large and could significantly increase France's colonial strength in the region if Acadians were to leave Nova Scotia in large numbers for a French colony, but Caulfeild proposed that the British "may always guard [themselves] from any injury [the Acadians] can be able, if willing, to do us" and use their agricultural system to improve Nova Scotia's agricultural industry enough to feed the growing colony from within.¹¹⁴ Caulfeild's emphasis on the uncertainty of Acadians' willingness to harm the British is notable, suggesting that he did not see conflict between the British and Acadians as inevitable and that he preferred to foster civil relations between the two groups, with the Acadians acting under British authority for the betterment of the colony. Here again, the British need to maintain access to Acadian agriculture and to protect its potential for growth elicited support for retaining Acadians within Nova Scotia, their lack of cooperation or desire to be governed by the British notwithstanding.

Notably, early Acadian objections to British demands for agricultural goods grown on Acadian marshland farms and to British attitudes towards Acadian property clearly expressed their discontent with British governance in Nova Scotia. In a letter to the merchant elites in Saint-Malo, the Breton port city in Northern France,¹¹⁵ 19 Acadian men living in the Bay of Fundy region near Annapolis Royal expressed the numerous problems they saw with the newly

¹¹³ Caulfeild to Lords of Trade, 1 Nov 1715, image 901, CO 217: C-9120.

¹¹⁴ Caulfeild to Lords of Trade, 1 Nov 1715, image 900-901, CO 217: C-9120.

¹¹⁵ For more information regarding Saint-Malo and its role in the North American Atlantic Maritime economy as well as the global economy of the eighteenth century, see Jean-François Brière, "Research Note: Saint-Malo and the Newfoundland Fisheries in the 18th Century," *Acadiensis* 17, no. 2 (1988): 131-138 and Henning Hillmann, *The Corsairs of Saint-Malo: Network Organization of a Merchant Elite under the Ancien Régime* (Columbia University Press: New York, 2021).

established British regime in Nova Scotia.¹¹⁶ As de Pontchartrain's expressed in November 1714, the Acadians were concerned that the British government would not allow them to sell their properties if they left Nova Scotia, but instead expected them to abandon their lands without compensation understanding that they would be occupied by British merchants and settlers. They were also worried by British attempts to requisition grain and meat grown for Acadian subsistence in order to feed the garrison.¹¹⁷ As such, the Acadians hoped that the merchants in Saint-Malo would advocate to the French King on their behalf in order that he might negotiate a more favourable arrangement with King George.¹¹⁸ Finally, the Acadians communicated that they had asked the British government in Nova Scotia for permission to plant and cultivate their

¹¹⁶ Jean Beliveau et al., "Petition des Acadiens a Messrs les Malouins pour obtenir la protection du Roy de France," 10 Oct 1714, image 217-220, Amérique septentrionale: C-10216. To determine that the authors of the letter lived near Annapolis Royal, this author cross referenced their names against census data from 1710 and 1714. Referenced census data includes F. Felix Pain, "Recensement des habitans Du port Royal avec leurs familles De cette presente année mil sept cent quatorze," 15 October 1714, 113152, reel 2572, image 239-245, Recensements et documents divers, Archives des Colonies, Dépôt des papiers publics des colonies, état civil et recensements, Public Archives Canada, Ottawa, Canada (hereafter Recensements et documents divers: C-2572); F. Felix Pain, "Recensement des habitans Des mines avec leurs familles De cette presente année mil sept cent quatorze," 15 October 1714, image 246-251, Recensements et documents divers: C-2572; F. Felix Pain, "Recensement des habitans Des Yekopeguit avec leurs familles," census of Cobeguit, 15 October 1714, image 252-253, Recensements et documents divers: C-2572; F. Felix Pain, "Recensement De toutes les familles de la paroisse De Beaubassin Dans Lacadie fait le vingt huitieme Du mois D'aout de la present année mil sept cent quatorze," 28 August 1714, image 206-214, Amérique septentrionale: C-10216; "Polle des habitans de la bans Lieux du fort du port Royal Speciffie famille par famille du 20 O'bre 1710," census of inhabitants within three miles of Fort Royal, 20 October 1710, 104282, reel 9119, image 1315-1318, CO 217: C-9119; "Liste des Habitants de Copequid et du Nombre de leurs Enfants," 1714, image 387-388, CO 217: C-9120.; and, "Liste des Habitants des Mines et du Nombre de leurs Enfants," 1714, image 381-386, CO 217: C-9120.

¹¹⁷ Beliveau et al., "Petition des Acadiens a Messrs les Malouins pour obtenir la protection du Roy de France," 10 Oct 1714, image 219, Amérique septentrionale: C-10216.

¹¹⁸ Beliveau et al., "Petition des Acadiens a Messrs les Malouins pour obtenir la protection du Roy de France," 10 Oct 1714, image 219, Amérique septentrionale: C-10216.

land throughout the preceding year, but did not believe that the British would allow them to do so even though it would facilitate subsistence and provisions for all parties, “sans conte que les terres saisait toujours en estast de faire valloir.”¹¹⁹ The Acadians distrusted the British government in Nova Scotia, but were also not interested in abandoning their lands and resettling elsewhere without compensation.¹²⁰ British determination to retain the Acadians as an agricultural asset was proving successful, but the Acadians’ recognition that the land would always produce enough for the subsistence of Nova Scotia suggests that they were uncertain as to whether or not their future in the colony was assured if the British decided to cultivate its lands themselves.

Acadian discontent and uncertainty did not alter the reality that Vetch and Caulfeild observed in Nova Scotia from the perspective of fostering a successful British colony, although it clearly factored into their discussions of Acadians’ desires to leave Nova Scotia. Still, Acadians were a resource with fertile working farms, the main stock of domestic animals in the colony, and the most knowledge of the region and its indigenous peoples out of any settler there. If the Acadians left Nova Scotia, then the British would lose them as a resource while the French might gain their expertise. Further, as Vetch argued, the fourteenth article of the Treaty of Utrecht only applied for a period of one year, which had expired when most Acadians requested permission to leave Nova Scotia with their possessions, including livestock.¹²¹ When considered in their

¹¹⁹ Beliveau et al., “Petition des Acadiens a Messrs les Malouins pour obtenir la protection du Roy de France,” 10 Oct 1714, image 220, Amérique septentrionale: C-10216. Author’s translation: *especially given that the land would always provide enough.*

¹²⁰ Faragher, 139. Faragher attributes this decision to deeply held values of community and home rooted in the peasant traditions of France, which Acadians in 1714 had integrated into their own culture.

¹²¹ Vetch to the Lords of Trade, 24 Nov 1714, image 440-441, CO 217: C-9120.

totality, Vetch's and Caulfeild's arguments for retaining Acadians in Nova Scotia demonstrate that British thinking regarding their presence and British interpretations of the Treaty of Utrecht's fourteenth article were motivated in large part by two main factors: (1) British desire for food security; and (2) British desire for agricultural growth in Nova Scotia, necessitating a focus on strong agricultural production throughout the colony and setting the stage to develop agricultural policy. Agriculture was necessarily considered a cornerstone of Nova Scotia's development, subsistence, and efficacy as a colony, forcing its agricultural industry and labourers into the limelight.

Chapter Three

Legitimacy and Security: Building Authority, Agricultural Debate, and The Oaths of Allegiance

After determining the higher level implications of Acadian migration out of Nova Scotia involved in the Treaty of Utrecht's fourteenth article, the colony's government turned its attention to more ground-level concerns regarding their administration including the illusive issue of an oath of allegiance; however, they immediately encountered barriers to firmly establishing their authority, power, and legitimacy. As the British government in Nova Scotia quickly discovered and communicated to authorities in England, British concerns regarding food security and demography in Nova Scotia that had been voiced when debating the Treaty of Utrecht's were not just abstract, but rather were represented by prominent factors of daily life there. Abysmal living conditions at Annapolis Royal weakened the efficacy of Nova Scotia's nascent government and military. Moreover, food security was precarious and destabilized by the continued refusal of most Acadians to offer an unconditional oath of allegiance to the British Crown.

British efforts to achieve an unconditional oath of allegiance from the Acadians had been limited since Nova Scotia had come under their banner, but that changed in 1717 when Lieutenant Governor John Doucett, appointed after Caulfield's death, began to push the matter more forcefully.¹²² In the aftermath of the conquest of Port Royal in 1710, most Acadians had merely been informed that they were living under British rule. In 1713, efforts began to be made to disseminate the fact that the colony had been officially ceded to England under the Treaty of

¹²² Faragher, 146-149.

Utrecht and that Acadians constituted British subjects, but no concrete steps were taken to acquire an unconditional oath of allegiance from the Acadians beyond requesting that they provide one. Notably, the Acadians had provided oaths to various governments in Acadia or Nova Scotia in the past; however, they had always involved many conditions and usually amounted to little more than a promise that they would not bear arms against the government of the hour.¹²³ In 1713, Caulfield successfully negotiated a written statement from the Acadians recognizing British sovereignty in Nova Scotia, but not an oath of allegiance to the Crown.¹²⁴ Generally, the British government in Nova Scotia did not believe that acquiring an unconditional oath of allegiance from the Acadians would be difficult: their homeland had been ceded to England and they were now living under the rule of a new king, who demanded their loyalty.¹²⁵ That said, the Acadians were a borderland people used to imperial regime change and unwilling to make themselves an enemy to any neighbouring government by committing themselves unconditionally to a government that their lived experiences taught would more than likely be transient.¹²⁶ Regardless, achieving food security was an essential component of establishing a legitimate and authoritative government in Nova Scotia, which would form the basis of British authorities' efforts to achieve an oath of allegiance from Acadian's in Nova Scotia.

¹²³ Faragher, 140.

¹²⁴ Faragher, 143-144.

¹²⁵ Faragher, 139-140.

¹²⁶ Faragher, 140-145, 148-149.

Challenges to Establishing Legitimacy and Authority

By late spring in 1716, British concerns about Acadians leaving Nova Scotia for nearby French regions began to resolve themselves of their own accord as many of those who had left the colony returned. On 16 May 1716, Caulfeild informed the Board of Trade of two pieces of good news: first, the Island of Saint John's,¹²⁷ which had become a popular location of settlement for many Acadians leaving Nova Scotia, was "intirely abandoned by those inhabitants who went there out of this Government;" and, second, that he had received a letter from the "People of Mines of Theire Resolution to Continue in this Government and are making all preparations for improvement, as formerly."¹²⁸ Given the challenges regarding the provisioning of the British garrison that Caulfeild had reported to the Board of Trade in 1715, this turn of events provided an avenue towards increasing sorely needed grain production at Mines while also diminishing the threat that French strength might grow through Acadian migration away from Nova Scotia. That said, the reality that Acadians would remain in Nova Scotia reinforced the issue of obtaining their Oath of Allegiance to King George I, which Caulfeild continued to be unable to wrest from them.¹²⁹

Complicating the issue of the Oath of Allegiance were increasing reports to the Board of Trade that conditions in Annapolis Royal were dismal while Acadian fields sat overflowing with good harvests that were being traded to the French.¹³⁰ In a letter to Board of Trade in February

¹²⁷ Present day Prince Edward Island.

¹²⁸ Thomas Caulfeild to Lords of Trade, 1 Nov 1716, image 953-954, CO 217: C-9120.

¹²⁹ See Thomas, Caulfeild to Secretary of War, 24 Xbr 1716, in Akins, *Selections*, 11-12. For a detailed analysis of the challenges in exacting an unconditional oath of allegiance from the Acadians between 1714 and the grand dérangément in 1755, see Faragher, 143-334.

¹³⁰ Lawrence Armstrong to Lords of Trade, 28 Feb 1716, image 936-939, CO 217: C-9120.

1716, one Captain Armstrong—recently returned to England from Annapolis Royal—¹³¹gave his assessment of the state of the garrison and the colony, painting an unfriendly, rebellious picture of the Acadians there.¹³² Armstrong described the agricultural industry in Nova Scotia, noting that the “Low lands that are Till’d produce very good Grain of all sorts and if improv’d might produce good Hemp and Hae in many” and suggesting that Pitch and Tar could be made easily from pine needles, while housing and ships could be constructed using plentiful timber.¹³³ That said, Armstrong also argued that:

One of the Great misfortunes of the Country is that the Inhabitants are French who having labour’d under only great oppressions have neglected the Improvement thereof, and if a War happens before a suitable number of English Inhabitants are Planted among them, ’tis not doubted but they will take up all advantages of any weakness or mismanagement of the Garrison, having refused the Oath of Allegiance to his Majestie King George and now in the time of Peace, follow a private Trade for the supply of the French of Cape Bretton with Provisions and other Necessaries.¹³⁴

Accordingly, Armstrong concluded, Annapolis Royal would “unavoidably fall into the hands of the French and Indians” if they were to go to war because there were too few “suitable” English inhabitants in Nova Scotia to reliably provision the garrison from within the colony.¹³⁵

¹³¹ See W. Pulteney, Secretary of War to Lords of Trade, 5 March 1716, image 947, CO 217: C-9120.

¹³² Captain Lawrence Armstrong’s impressions of Acadians may have been unreliable as he had a history of mistreating Acadian inhabitants near Annapolis Royal, at one point going so far that Caulfeild reported his behaviour to the Lords of Trade, stating: “I must owne tis with the greatest reluctance emmagenable that I am obliged to acquaint your Lordships of the frequent misbehaviour of Capt’n Armstrong of this Garrison Towards Sveral Inhabitants here and by my next shall Transmitt your Lordships the several Complaints In behalf of The said Inhabitants.” See Thomas Caulfeild to Lords of Trade, 1 Nov 1715, image 905, CO 217: C-9120. This author was unable to find record of the specific complaints made by the Acadians; however, its mention in this letter makes them worth consideration when assessing Armstrong’s statements.

¹³³ Armstrong to Lords of Trade, 28 Feb 1716, image 936, CO 217: C-9120.

¹³⁴ Armstrong to Lords of Trade, 28 Feb 1716, image 937, CO 217: C-9120. See Faragher, 149-50 for a brief discussion of illegal trade out of Nova Scotia.

¹³⁵ Armstrong to Lords of Trade, 28 Feb 1716, image 937, CO 217: C-9120.

As Armstrong aptly assessed, access to food and other provisions was a significant weak point for the British garrison if they were to go to war with the French: they were as heavily reliant on the Acadians for food security as officials had feared when debating the merits of the Treaty of Utrecht's fourteenth article. Further, Armstrong believed that Acadians had intentionally failed to cultivate the land to its maximum potential to avoid provisioning non-Acadian parties within their borderland amidst imperial change. Armstrong also confirmed fears voiced during debate over the Treaty of Utrecht that there were not enough alternative sources of locally based provisions if the Acadians chose to side with the French in a conflict. Equally, the idea of Acadians trading with the French on Cape Breton was troubling: while the British garrison was concerned with its own provisioning and food security, harvests were being traded out of Nova Scotia and filling French bellies instead of English ones.

On the subject of the garrison's particular weaknesses and mismanagement at Annapolis Royal, Armstrong had much to say. While Fort Royal's layout made sense, its construction materials—sod and timber—meant that it was in constant need of repair “subject to Damage by every thaw.”¹³⁶ Armstrong assessed the houses and barracks for officers and soldiers along with the Store Houses and Magazines as being “in a ruinous condition and not like to stand three years without a thorough repair.”¹³⁷ In an account enclosed in his letter, Armstrong also recounted a story from Colonel Vetch's time in command of Annapolis Royal,¹³⁸ including the detail “[t]hat the soldiers being uneasy for want of Sufficient Clothings, Bedding, and other necessaries, and receiving no other Subsistence than Month Provisions, sent them from

¹³⁶ Armstrong to Lords of Trade, 28 Feb 1716, image 938, CO 217: C-9120.

¹³⁷ Armstrong to Lords of Trade, 28 Feb 1716, image 939, CO 217: C-9120.

¹³⁸ Colonel Vetch held command of Annapolis Royal from 1710 to 1713.

Boston,”¹³⁹ suggesting that the quality of life and provisions at the garrison had always been rather abysmal.

While Armstrong’s analysis of the situation in Annapolis Royal and Nova Scotia at large is highly critical, he proposed a solution to the precariousness of the garrison’s food security and provisioning problems with general benefits for the living conditions of British military members in Nova Scotia, too. Armstrong’s proposal was two pronged: (1) that British subjects should be settled throughout Nova Scotia to farm the land and supply the garrison; and (2) that Annapolis Royal should be established as a free port “for the better Encouragement of the Trade and Country [...]” when a sufficient British population had been achieved.¹⁴⁰ These two suggestions had the potential to change the demographic makeup of Nova Scotia, but did not address a method to attract British settlers in the first place. Still, assuming that enough British subjects could be enticed to settle in Nova Scotia to supply the garrison, they would be able to build on Acadian agricultural practices in order to improve the land in a British vision and keep the garrison supplied, even in times of war. Establishing Annapolis Royal as a free port would attract trade, which would ease nonperishable provisioning problems faced by the garrison, improving the quality of life of military members there. With increased provisions and a higher number of cooperative British inhabitants in Nova Scotia, the physical conditions in Annapolis Royal could be greatly improved, as basic food and clothing needs would be addressed, and the labour and supplies to repair dilapidated structures would be available. While Armstrong’s proposal was large in scale, his plan was based in achieving food security through agricultural improvement,

¹³⁹ Armstrong to Lords of Trade, 28 Feb 1716, image 940-941, CO 217: C-9120.

¹⁴⁰ Armstrong to Lords of Trade, 28 Feb 1716, image 938, CO 217: C-9120.

demonstrating that agriculture was a main focus for individuals in Nova Scotia beyond those tasked with the governance and administration of the colony at higher levels.

Armstrong's sense that the conditions at the garrison in Annapolis Royal were poor is reinforced by a letter from Caulfeild to the Board of Trade in May 1716, in which he enclosed a copy of a letter he had originally written to the Board of Ordinance defending the garrisons' ongoing need for bedding and clothes.¹⁴¹ As he summarized to the Lord of Trade, they had:

[A] necessity for Beding with which this Garrison hath never been supplied since our arrival here neare five years: and as to our cloathing of which there is no Species butt Coats remaining in the Store are Rotten and at such Excessive prizes that the men refuse them as not fitt for service [...] soe that at this Time there is butt few Soldiers that mount the Yard that have either Shoes Stocking or Shirts, to which if some speedy remedy be not applyed I leave your Lordshipps to Judge of the Consequences, which I have always to the uttmost of my ability Laboured to prevent and shall still continue to the same.¹⁴²

Caulfeild's tone is telling: this was a situation he saw as grave, and he painted a stark picture of its severity. Unclothed soldiers with no bedding cannot be expected to hold a fort, let alone a colony. As Caulfeild seems to imply, unclothed soldiers with no bedding might also be apt to rebel. In a colony where the British were far outnumbered by the Acadians, who would not swear an oath of allegiance to the King and had trading relations with indigenous peoples and the French, one can only imagine how disastrous the consequences of allowing the garrison to continue in this state might have been. Given these circumstances, it is easy to comprehend that watching Acadian fields yield good crops while believing that whatever they harvested past their own subsistence needs would be traded to the French created outrage and concern for the

¹⁴¹ See Thomas Caulfeild to Lords of Trade, 16 May 1716, image 953-956, CO 217: C-9120.

¹⁴² Caulfeild to Lords of Trade, 16 May 1716, image 955, CO 217: C-9120. The emphasis used was Caulfeild's.

security of the garrison and colony amongst British authorities, soldiers, and merchant in the region, particularly when combined with Armstrong's concerns over provisioning in general.

Alongside the issues of the oaths of allegiance and provisioning was the utter lack of judicial institutions or legislative power in Nova Scotia, which created tension between Nicholson and Caulfeild in addition to leaving Caulfeild limited in his attempts to assert authority within Nova Scotia or resolve disputes among its inhabitants.¹⁴³ As Caulfeild wrote to the Board of Trade, he had been mediating the daily conflicts he encountered himself given the few options available to him, "to the satisfaction of both parties."¹⁴⁴ In 1716, Caulfeild's actions began to raise eyebrows: by Caulfeild's account to the Board of Trade, Nicholson questioned his authority "to do Justice in Civil Affairs" and demanded that he reveal what orders allowed him to do so.¹⁴⁵ Caulfeild justified his decision to act as a mediator and judge in civil affairs despite the fact that he had not been granted any official right to do so from any body of authority in England, stating that he "held himself blameable to suffer Injustice to be done before me without taking notice thereof, having never interposed farther than by the Consent of both parties, and I humblie desier Your Lordshipps will direct some thing on that head."¹⁴⁶ While Caulfeild's request would not be met with any action until after his death in 1717, it highlights his inability to establish and enforce policies in Nova Scotia: without true authority, Caulfeild was relegated to putting out whatever fires he observed without any recourse to direct Nova Scotia's development beyond writing a letter—whether the issue at hand was an oath of allegiance,

¹⁴³ Caulfeild to Lords of Trade, 16 May 1716, image 954, CO 217: C-9120.

¹⁴⁴ Caulfeild to Lords of Trade, 16 May 1716, image 954, CO 217: C-9120.

¹⁴⁵ Caulfeild to Lords of Trade, 16 May 1716, image 954, CO 217: C-9120.

¹⁴⁶ Caulfeild to Lords of Trade, 16 May 1716, image 954-955, CO 217: C-9120.

neighbours' quarrels, Acadian's complaints about the conduct of British military personnel, or improvements to the grain industry in Les Mines.¹⁴⁷

The early challenges Caulfeild faced in administering the colony of Nova Scotia represent a series of complications to the broader conclusions he and Vetch drew about the importance of agriculture in Nova Scotia. While the men had convincingly argued that Acadian agricultural techniques, livestock, and labour were necessary for British food security in the colony and that Acadian agricultural practices could be utilized to grow Nova Scotia's agricultural industry and economy, conversation surrounding the Treaty of Utrecht's fourteenth article had not progressed towards implementing any systems or policies to ensure that British people were the primary recipients of Acadian agricultural goods or that Acadian people were making the necessary improvements to their agricultural operations to grow Nova Scotia's agricultural industry in line with the British vision of its potential. Without judicial institutions or legislative power in Nova Scotia, it was proving difficult for Caulfeild to regulate disputes between parties, let alone to create and enforce agricultural policy oriented towards food security.

At the same time, Caulfeild was faced with problems provisioning the British garrison at Annapolis Royal that were so severe his men were chafing under miserable living conditions, made worse by the fact that Acadians inhabiting Nova Scotia were trading agricultural goods and provisions to the French in Cape Breton, rather than to the British. Combined with the Acadians' continual refusal to offer an oath of allegiance to the British king, it is clear that Caulfeild's

¹⁴⁷ These issues are referenced throughout Caulfeild's correspondence with British authorities during his time as Lieutenant Governor. For one of many examples, see Thomas Caulfeild to Lords of Trade, 16 May 1716, image 953-956, CO 217: C-9120.

request for the Board of Trade to determine some mechanism to provide judicial and legislative power to those on the ground in Nova Scotia was both prudent and reasonable: there was no way to establish a strong government in Nova Scotia without the means to adequately provision the British garrison there or to create laws that would regulate agricultural production and trade. Once such a mechanism was in place, Nova Scotia's agricultural industry could be moulded to sustain the colony's population until the industry's growth could realize Vetch and Caulfeild's belief that its agriculture would be a key benefit to the colony's industry, economy, and success.

Agriculture and the Oaths of Allegiance

The Board of Trade appointed a new Lieutenant Governor—John Doucett—and Governor—Richard Philipps—of Nova Scotia in 1717, with Doucett arriving at Annapolis Royal in October of that year to succeed Caulfeild as its commander after his death.¹⁴⁸ Upon his arrival to Annapolis Royal, Doucett was informed that Acadians in Nova Scotia had “never yett acknowledged His Majesty,”¹⁴⁹ prompting him to summon those Acadians living in or near Annapolis Royal to sign an Oath of Allegiance to King George I that he drew up in an attempt to mitigate the risks that might emerge from the unaligned population.¹⁵⁰ Of this encounter, Doucett sent three accounts to the Secretary of State, the Secretary of War, and the Lords of Trade

¹⁴⁸ See John Doucett to Philipps, 5 Nov 1717, image 1103-1104, CO 217: C-9120; and Richard Philipps to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State the Right Honourable Josph Addison Esquire, 1717, image 1162-1163, CO 217: C-9120. Doucett served as Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia until 1726, while Philipps served as Governor of Nova Scotia until 1749.

¹⁴⁹ Doucett to Philipps, 5 Nov 1717, image 1104, CO 217: C-9120; John Doucett to Lords of Trade, 6 Nov 1717, image 1105, CO 217: C-9120.

¹⁵⁰ John Doucett to Lords of Trade, 6 Nov 1717, image 1105, CO 217: C-9120. For the Oath of Allegiance, see John Doucett, Oath of Allegiance for French Inhabitants Near the Fort, 6 Nov 1717, image 1111-1112, CO 217: C-9120.

respectively. Doucett informed the Lords of Trade that he had tried to elicit an Oath of Allegiance from the Acadians, telling “them how much they stood in their own Light, and how Dangerous it was to Trifle with so great a Monarch, allso declared I could by no means Suffer any of their Vessells to Pass this Fort to Fish or Trade on that Coast without they became Subjects to His Majesty, and that as soon as they should become such they might expect the same Liberty as the English.”¹⁵¹

While Doucett’s threat to disallow Acadian vessels to pass Annapolis Royal constituted a looming hardship for Acadian subsistence and trade relations, he did not receive the response he expected for from the Acadians he addressed. Rather, they collectively declined to sign the oath, providing two terms of their own to sign the oath as it was written, and a suggestion for an alternative oath that they might swear instead.¹⁵² The core reason the Acadians provided for denying Doucett’s response was diplomatic, begging that he would “bien considerer que nous ne somme qun petit nombre d’habittons et de vouloir bien faires assembler Des Deputy des L’autre Colonies des mines, de beaubassin, et Cobequit pour que nous puission repondre au demande qui nous sont faitte La Chose merittau aplication vous faisant conaistre que cest pour la derniere fois.”¹⁵³ The contacted Acadians rightly pointed out that they were not representative of their

¹⁵¹ Doucett to Lords of Trade, 6 Nov 1717, image 1105-1106, CO 217: C-9120.

¹⁵² Notably, Faragher has argued that illegal trade networks out of Acadia, primarily to Cape Breton with aid from New England, limited Acadian need to trade out of Annapolis Royal and were strengthened by Doucett’s embargo as it entrenched the necessity to grow trade networks independent of British authorities in Nova Scotia. See Faragher, 143-150.

¹⁵³ French Inhabitants Near the Fort to Doucett, 6 Nov 1717, image 1113, CO 217: C-9120. Author’s translation: *[We ask that Lieutenant Governor Doucett] kindly consider that we represent a s number of the French inhabitants in Nova Scotia and, as such, we request that representatives from the other settlements of Mines, Beaubassin, and Cobeguit are assembled so that we can respond to this important request, which you have informed us has been made for the last time.*

whole people group and could not swear allegiance without consulting those in other settlements given that Doucett was offering the opportunity to swear the oath for the last time; however, their first term to signing the oath—that representative from Mines, Beaubassin, and Cobeguit be assembled to discuss the matter and make a decision as a group—would have been difficult to achieve moving into winter when travel to and from Annapolis Royal became more difficult than normal.¹⁵⁴

The Acadians' second term to their signing the Oath of Allegiance was more complex than their first, and played on the instability that existed within Nova Scotia at the time. In essence, the Acadians demanded that the British government at Annapolis Royal devise a means to protect them from the indigenous people in Nova Scotia before they would sign the oath, as it was commonly believed that the French controlled the indigenous people in the maritime region and might use them to retaliate against the Acadians should they swear allegiance to the British

¹⁵⁴ See S. Bourg, Dingle, Rene, Pierre Terriot; Les Habitants des Mines to Doucett, 10 Feb 1718, image 1184-1182, CO 217: C-9120. Doucett eventually sent the Oath of Allegiance to the Acadians at Mines for their signature via letter during the winter of 1717 and 1718. When they received Doucett's request, they cited the impassable nature of the roads as a reason for their refusal to sign the oath at that time, arguing that they could not assemble to discuss it collectively: "[...] nous sommes anse désespoir de ne pouvoir y répondre comme vous l'auriez souhaite mais la difficulté des temps et des chemins à present Impracticables nous a empesché de nous pouvoir assembler dans tous les heuse air conovisins comme nous l'aurions voulu pour Déterminer sur le choix que nous avons à faire pour prendre notre Party, c'est ce qui fait que nous vous pions en commun de nous accorder du temps pour et afin que nous puissions nous assembler toute la Colonie en general pour pouvoir déterminer pour à l'égard du Serment inclus dans votre lettre nous ne pouvons pas le Signer dans la forme qu'il nous a parue [...]." Author's translation: *We apologize for the fact that we cannot respond to your request as you wished, but the difficulty of the times and of the current impassability of the roads had prevented us from assembling in a neighbourly spirit as we would have liked in order to determine the choice that we have to make for people. As such, we collectively request that you grant us more time to respond to you fully so that we can assemble the whole settlement to determine our response. With regard to the oath included in your letter, we cannot sign it in the form it had appeared to us [...].*"

crown.¹⁵⁵ As the Acadians claimed, they could not sign the oath if such a guarantee did not exist first “sans nous exposer a Etre esgorgez dans nos maison.”¹⁵⁶ Doucett’s letter to the Board of Trade dismissed the Acadians’ second term for signing the Oath of Allegiance he had drawn up and their reasoning for it as a constructed falsehood. As Doucett argued:

As to what [the Acadians] take notion on in their answer concerning their Dread of the Indians, I am Farr from believing what they say For to my knowledge if an Indian is att any time insolent in their Houses they not only turn them out but beat them very severly, therefore since they doe not revenge themselves on ‘em for such usage is my reason of objection to what they alledge should they become Subjects to his Majesty [...].¹⁵⁷

Rather, Doucett suggested that the Acadians wanted to avoid angering their priests should they swear allegiance to a Protestant king. He therefore requested that the Board of Trade draw up an order to be shared with France, the French governments in Canada and Cape Breton, and the garrison in Annapolis Royal stating that they should “supress and severly punish any Indian or Others the French who shall insult the People of Nova Scotia or Lacadie that Live under the Protection of His Majesty King George.”¹⁵⁸ In this manner, Doucett would address both the Acadians’ concerns for their welfare should they sign the oath and his belief that their true fear

¹⁵⁵ French Inhabitants Near the Fort to Doucett, 6 Nov 1717, image 1113-1114, CO 217: C-9120.

¹⁵⁶ French Inhabitants Near the Fort to Doucett, 6 Nov 1717, image 1114, CO 217: C-9120.

Author’s translation: *without exposing ourselves to have our throats cut in our own homes*. As had been highlighted previously through discussion of relations between indigenous peoples and the Acadians, these claims are largely rhetorical and not necessarily representative of a likely threat posed by indigenous peoples in the region. See Olive Dickason, “From ‘One Nation’ in the Northeast to ‘New Nation’ in the Northwest: A Look at the Emergence of the Metis,” 22-28; Dickason, *Canada's First Nations*, 169-170; Griffiths, *Contexts of Acadian History*, 23-25, Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 37, 57, 87, 179, 259; Peace, 8, 21-31; Upton, *Micmacs and Colonists*, 16-47; Wicken, “Re-examining Mi’kmaq-Acadian Relations,” 95-101.

¹⁵⁷ Doucett to Lords of Trade, 6 Nov 1717, image 1105, CO 217: C-9120.

¹⁵⁸ Doucett to Lords of Trade, 6 Nov 1717, image 1105, CO 217: C-9120.

lay in the consequences of going against their priests' wishes, at least by providing them with a paper shield.

While the Acadians were unwilling to sign the Oath of Allegiance, they did offer a compromise to Doucett that would mitigate their risk to the British government without swearing themselves to the British king. As the Acadians wrote, “en cas qu'on ne peut pas trouver d'autre moyens nous somme prest de prester serments comme que nous ne prendrons point les armes ni contre sa Majesté Britannique ni contre la France, ni contre aucun de leur sujet on de leur alyez.”¹⁵⁹ While the agreement the Acadians offered provided the British garrison a guarantee that they would not face an Acadian rebellion in Nova Scotia, it suggested Acadian neutrality in conflict rather than participation as British subjects and it did not address British concerns that Acadians would not supply the garrison with provisions in times of conflict. Accordingly, Doucett did not mention the Acadian's offer in his letter to the Board of Trade; however, in Doucett's account of these events to the Secretary of State, he concluded by positing that Acadians' allegiance as British subjects might allow those in Nova Scotia to “hope that the country about us which has been neglected (ever since the reduction of this Place) would be again improved so far that we might not longer want grain, cattle and other necessarys as wee do at present.”¹⁶⁰ Doucett was disinterested in Acadian neutrality, rather demanding to govern them as British subjects so that the inhabitants of Nova Scotia could focus on increasing agricultural yields and making improvements to the land without the threat of widespread conflict within the

¹⁵⁹ French Inhabitants Near the Fort to Doucett, 6 Nov 1717, image 1114, CO 217: C-9120. Author's translation: *In case no other means can be found, we are ready to give a similar oath that we will not take up arms against the British monarch, nor against France, nor against any of their subjects or allies.*

¹⁶⁰ John Doucett to the Secretary of State, 5 Nov 1717, in Akins, *Selections*, 13.

colony, providing subsistence for the colony. Given this, food security formed the firm base of British desires to exact an oath of allegiance from Acadians in Nova Scotia, even under a new Lieutenant Governor.

That said, Doucett failed to envisage the ways in which trade was becoming increasingly intertwined among all of the inhabitants of Nova Scotia. Given earlier concerns about Acadians trading with the French, Doucett's threat to disallow Acadian vessels to pass Annapolis Royal would have harmed Acadians' subsistence assuming he could enforce it; however, it would have also hampered what trade did exist between British and Acadian inhabitants and merchants in Nova Scotia. After Doucett extended his threat to the population of Mines in an attempt to extort their oaths of allegiance to no avail in December 1717,¹⁶¹ British inhabitants and merchants were quick to point out the ways in which this new embargo would negatively impact industry in the colony.¹⁶² The Englishmen and merchants crafted their argument delicately, beginning by highlighting that, while "since the reduction of this please there never hath been any regulation nor notice taken of the Commerce of this Collony" it had continually improved and would continue to do so "provided that some obstickles may if possible be removed" in order to avoid

¹⁶¹ See John Doucett, Doucett to W. Melanson, 5 Dec 1717, image 1119-1120, CO 217: C-9120; John Doucett to the Reverend Father Felix, 5 Dec 1717, image 1122-1123, CO 217: C-9120; John Doucett to Lords of Trade, 6 Feb 1718, image 1182-1183, CO 217: C-9120; Les Habitants des Mines to Doucett, 10 Feb 1718, image 1184-1182, CO 217: C-9120; John Doucett to the French Inhabitants at Minis, 12 Mar 1718, image 1202-1203, CO 217: C-9120; John Doucett, Doucett to the Reverend Father Felix, 26 Mar 1718, image 1204-1205, CO 217: C-9120; F. Felix, Reverend Father Felix to Doucett, 29 Mar 1718, image 1208-1210, CO 217: C-9120.

¹⁶² J. Adams, Petter Bomdore, John Burges, Jos Cole, Samuel Douglas, John Dyson, Petter Feilding, William Gould, Samuel Green, Jos Jennings, Auths Oliver, William Sherriff, William Winniett, and Will Wright, Inhabitants and Merchants of Annapolis Royal to Doucett, 5 Feb 1718, image 1178-1181, CO 217: C-9120.

harming Nova Scotia's industry and economy.¹⁶³ The men then noted that Nova Scotian trade goods "chiefly consisting in furs, fish, and Grain" were being lawfully exported in small quantities, but were competing against "clandestine trade carried on by some as wee are informed from New England, Cape Bretton, and Canada."¹⁶⁴ As the men argued, they would be working under "[i]nsupportable inconveniences if [their] former privilege of employing the French Inhabitants in [their] sloops and other fishing vessels or to have any commerce with them for the future is to be abridged,"¹⁶⁵ particularly given that there were not enough British inhabitants to fill the gap that would be left in the labour and trade markets.¹⁶⁶

Fishing and trade in grain and furs, both of which were sourced through Acadians or their trade networks with indigenous peoples and New England merchants, were essential to the delicate trade system and economy that English inhabitants and merchants were trying to build in Nova Scotia.¹⁶⁷ While the English inhabitants and merchants wanted more trade regulation to be put in place to stop illicit trading and free up their markets, Acadian labour and trade goods such as grain were essential to keep Nova Scotia's industry and economy from toppling. Barring Acadians from fishing and trading along Nova Scotia's coast until they signed an Oath of

¹⁶³ Adams, Bomdore, Burges, Cole, Douglas, Dyson, Feilding, Gould, Green, Jennings, Oliver, Sherriff, Winniett, and Wright, *Inhabitants and Merchants of Annapolis Royal to Doucett*, 5 Feb 1718, image 1178, CO 217: C-9120.

¹⁶⁴ Adams et al., *Inhabitants and Merchants of Annapolis Royal to Doucett*, 5 Feb 1718, image 1178-1179, CO 217: C-9120.

¹⁶⁵ Adams et al., *Inhabitants and Merchants of Annapolis Royal to Doucett*, 5 Feb 1718, image 1179, CO 217.

¹⁶⁶ Adams et al., *Inhabitants and Merchants of Annapolis Royal to Doucett*, 5 Feb 1718, image 1178-1180, CO 217.

¹⁶⁷ Faragher, 7-23, 48, 184-186; Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*. Peace, 5-38.

Allegiance was a big gamble: the colony's industry relied on Acadian labour and agricultural goods for trade as much in practice as it had in Vetch and Caulfeild's earlier theories.

Doucett's immediate focus on acquiring an oath of allegiance from the Acadians when he arrived in Nova Scotia originated for two reasons: first, the Acadians constituted the largest portion of Nova Scotia's population, but had sworn no allegiance to the British crown, making them difficult to control and leaving them as an unallied threat to the still fragile and underdeveloped British government in the colony; second, the British garrison at Annapolis Royal needed a reliable source of provisions from within the colony and Acadians were the main source agricultural goods, particularly grain. If the Acadians were to give an Oath of Allegiance to the British Crown, Doucett could focus his energy on improving the land and encouraging Acadian agricultural production and growth without worrying that the garrison would starve if a conflict broke out. While Doucett politically needed the Acadians to provide an oath of allegiance so that his citizenry was uniformly composed of British subjects under the control of the British Crown, his efforts were pragmatically based in the colony's need for food security and the economic opportunities provided by securing Acadian labour and agriculture. Moving forward, the pragmatic aspects of Doucett's efforts to obtain the Acadians' oaths of allegiance would become a focus of agricultural policies and regulations created across Nova Scotia under Philipps' governorship.

Chapter Four

The New British Granary?: Establishing Systems of Governance and New Agricultural Policies

While Lt. Gov. Doucett was trying to enforce order in Nova Scotia by achieving oaths of allegiance from its Acadian population, Governor Philipps was occupied with enacting a plan for civil government from King George I. Philipps received a request from the King's Secretary of State in 1717 to govern Nova Scotia and the nearby colony of Placentia,¹⁶⁸ but was not given a commission to do so or a plan for the manner in which he would govern the regions.

Accordingly, Philipps refused to accept the position of Governor until both criteria were fulfilled.¹⁶⁹ In the summer of 1719, Philipps was commissioned the Governor of Placentia in Newfoundland and the Governor of the Province of Nova Scotia, or Acadie in America by the King.¹⁷⁰ He also received clear directions regarding the government he was to establish in Nova Scotia from the Board of Trade, specifically that it would follow the model of government already in place in Virginia and use a council to create the laws and statutes that would regulate life in the colony. The Council's members would be approved by the King and would act under the guidance of Philipps as Governor of Nova Scotia, with any subsequent governors also being

¹⁶⁸ Placentia was a sparsely populated former French colony in Newfoundland that, like Acadia, was ceded to England in 1713 under Treaty of Utrecht.

¹⁶⁹ Richard Phillipps to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State, 1717, image 1162-1163, CO 217 C:9120.

¹⁷⁰ Lords of Trade to Richard Philipps, 19 June 1719, CO 218/3, Colonial Office: Nova Scotia and Cape Breton, Entry Books (CO 218), The National Archives of the UK, England. The ambiguity in Philipps title is noteworthy: Nova Scotia was alternatively named as Acadie, signaling the depth of insecurity within the region as to its truest identity.

appointed by the King.¹⁷¹ As soon as possible after his arrival in Nova Scotia, Philipps was directed to provide an assessment of “what may be further wanting towards the Establishing a Civil Government” to the Secretaries of State and the Board of Trade, particularly regarding inhabitants in Nova Scotia who were qualified to form an assembly, “sit to be Judges, Justices or Sherrifs” or could otherwise be useful to the civil government there.¹⁷²

In addition to enacting a plan for British civil government in Nova Scotia, Philipps consolidated the individual military companies across Nova Scotia into Philipps’ Regiment of the Foot, which later became known as the 40th,¹⁷³ allowing him more centralized military control of the region immediately upon his arrival in Nova Scotia than any British authority had formerly held.¹⁷⁴ Importantly, the unification of military forces in Nova Scotia and centralization of their command was prompted by the buildup of French forces at Louisbourg in Île Royale beginning in 1717,¹⁷⁵ demonstrating that British fears regarding its proximity and strength were not unwarranted. Unified under Philipps’ command, military forces in Nova Scotia increased from 234 men and officers to a total of 400 men and officers. As a result, when Philipps arrived in Nova Scotia in April 1720 he was uniquely positioned to immediately pitch his focus towards constructing the Nova Scotia Council and collecting information as to which of Nova Scotia’s inhabitants would be useful in creating and maintaining civil government in the colony.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷¹ Lords of Trade to Richard Philipps, 19 June 1719, CO 218.

¹⁷² Lords of Trade to Richard Philipps, 19 June 1719, CO 218.

¹⁷³ Faragher, 151; Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 274-276.

¹⁷⁴ Faragher, 151-152.

¹⁷⁵ Faragher, 151-152.

¹⁷⁶ Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 274-281.

On 25 April 1720, Philipps had held the inaugural meeting of the Council with himself and Doucett along with nine other British men.¹⁷⁷ Finally, Nova Scotia had a functional government with legislative power capable of promoting British interests in the region,¹⁷⁸ which it began to do immediately by creating agricultural policies intended to achieve food security and stability. Existing British fears regarding food insecurity and the oath of allegiance were manifested in agricultural policies and regulations designed to increase British power, authority, and legitimacy in Nova Scotia by reducing the Acadians' capacity to act without deference to British institutions and by asserting British control over the agricultural industry there. Ultimately, it was hoped that these action would ensure food security in Nova Scotia and guarantee the potential economic opportunities offered by the agricultural industry itself, demonstrating that Nova Scotia's government saw the agricultural industry as an opportunity for economic growth in addition to viewing food security as a foundational policy issue.

The Council's First Foray into Law-Making

In his first report to the King's principal Secretary of State, Philipps succinctly described his observations of Nova Scotia's inhabitants, arguing that the Acadians—who continued to

¹⁷⁷ These men included Major Lawrence Armstrong, Major Paul Mascarene, Reverend John Harrison, Cyprian Southack, Arthur Savage, Hibbert Newton, William Skene, William Shirreff, and Peter Boudre. On 28 April 1720, John Adams was added to the Council as its twelfth member.

¹⁷⁸ Moody argues that while Philipps worked hard to establish a framework for governance in Nova Scotia, the Council never fully equipped the Nova Scotian government to effectively administer their predominantly French, Roman Catholic citizenry, essentially masking a military government with aspirations of civil government. That said, he applauds Philipps' efforts to create the essential frameworks for civil government, even though he does not believe it was terribly effective until after the establishment of Halifax in 1749 and the introduction of a genuine elected assembly. See Moody, "Making a British Nova Scotia," 146-148.

refuse to provide an unconditional oath of allegiance to the Crown and principally lived along the Isthmus and River of Annapolis Royal—were hoping that the province would be taken back by the French and were inciting “the Indians to robbery and murder, to the destruction of trade and hinderance of settling the country” in an attempt to aid a return to their former government.¹⁷⁹ Philipps also noted that the Acadians were “seated on fertile soil and raise great store of corn. And cattle, with which and their furs, they traffic at pleasure with the neighbouring French Colonies at Cape Breton, and Island St. John’s and refused supplies to the Garrisons in the greatest necessity.”¹⁸⁰ Clearly, Philipps was well versed in the issues that Nova Scotia had faced since 1713, particularly concerning food security, illegal trade out of the province, and the oaths of allegiance. Armed with new legislative power, Philipps immediately sought to address these problems with the support of the Council. As its first ever legislative actions, the Council created two new laws to address the problems Philipps observed regarding grain production and exports.

First, the Council passed an order that a public magazine be constructed at Annapolis Royal at provincial expense to “receive the grain” produced within the province.¹⁸¹ The Council further refined their order as follows, and provided their reasoning for it:

[...T]hat is to say, what is about the supply of each persons family that hath such grain to sell in order that the Inhabitants of this river & others which have not means to raise graine may be readily supplied out of such Magazine and also the Indians inhabiting this

¹⁷⁹ Richard Philipps to Lord Carteret, His Majesty’s Principal Secretary of State, in Akins, *Selections*, 18-19.

¹⁸⁰ Richard Philipps to Lord Carteret, His Majesty’s Principal Secretary of State, in Akins, *Selections*, 18-19.

¹⁸¹ Council minutes, 27 April 1720, in *Nova Scotia Archives III: Original Minutes of His Majesty’s Council at Annapolis Royal, 1720-1739*, Archibald M. MacMechan, ed. (Halifax: McAlpine Publishing Co., Limited, 1908) (hereafter MacMechan, *NSA III*), 2.

Province who are friends may have their support from and be thereby made to depend on the Government provided a proper Method be found out; the same being not hurtful to the Traders of this Province.¹⁸²

By determining that a public magazine would be built in Nova Scotia where all grain produced over the amount needed for individual families' subsistence could be stored, the Council aimed to assure that they could supply persons without sufficient grain production for their subsistence from the province's excess grain. In this manner, the Council could mitigate issues with grain supply that had plagued Nova Scotia, particularly the garrison at Annapolis Royal, since the province was ceded to the British.¹⁸³ The Council also transparently stated that a key element of the motivation for their order was to force the inhabitants of Nova Scotia, including indigenous populations there, to rely on the government for their subsistence, although the Council did include the caveat that this manufactured reliance would not interfere with the trade that already existed in the province. As Doucett had learned, trade and agricultural production were intricately connected (and complicated) and the Council was careful to recognize the implicit impacts that their plan might have on Nova Scotia's growing trade economy.¹⁸⁴

Notably, the Council did not elaborate on how their plan would avoid hurting existing trade: a centralized granary from which to distribute agricultural goods would allow the Council to have better control over their population by forcing them to rely on the government for food security, but it would also unavoidably cut into the excess grain available in Nova Scotia for

¹⁸² Council minutes, 27 April 1720, in MacMechan, *NSA III*, 2. Also see Hodson, 35.

¹⁸³ See Caulfeild to Secretary of State, 3 May 1715, in Akins, *Selections*, 8; Doucett to the Secretary of State, 5 Nov 1717, in Akins, *Selections*, 13; and, Armstrong to Lords of Trade, 28 Feb 1716, image 936-939 CO 217: C-9120.

¹⁸⁴ See Adams et al., *Inhabitants and Merchants of Annapolis Royal to Doucett*, 5 Feb 1718, image 1178-1181, CO 217: C-9120.

trade, particularly given that the Council clearly stated their intent to collect any grain above what was needed for individual families' subsistence. In this manner, the Council's plan might also have been intended to limit the illegal trade that was being carried on between the Acadians, the French, and New England,¹⁸⁵ but it is unlikely to have been effective given that the province only had 400 soldiers and officers present to enforce the new law, most of whom were located at or near Annapolis Royal.¹⁸⁶ The logistics of the plan became moot by the autumn of 1720, when it was determined that the whole enterprise of the magazine would need to be abandoned due to a lack of funds with which to construct, run, and maintain it.¹⁸⁷ Regardless, this first piece of legislation clearly demonstrates that the newly formed Council was deeply concerned by food security in Nova Scotia and recognized that the issue of food security had the potential to increase British control of the province: if inhabitants of Nova Scotia were forced to depend on the government for their food security, they might be more likely to act in a friendly manner and do as the government suggested in sociopolitical matters—perhaps even with regard to the issue of the oath of allegiance.

The second order the Council made required that all vessels transporting grain produced in Nova Scotia to any other location under the jurisdiction of the Council would provide a £100 bond in New England currency to the Governor of Nova Scotia. This bond guaranteed that all of the grain taken on board each vessel would be brought to Annapolis Royal for purchase by the

¹⁸⁵ See Armstrong to Lords of Trade, 28 Feb 1716, image 937, CO 217: C-9120; and Faragher, 149-150. After the fortress Louisbourg was established on Île Royale in 1717, the British government became somewhat more concerned with controlling trade into and out of Nova Scotia to ensure that Nova Scotian goods did not add to growing French imperial strength in the region.

¹⁸⁶ Faragher, 151-152.

¹⁸⁷ Council minutes, 24 September 1720, in MacMechan, *NSA III*, 15-16.

government at the common price of four pence per bushel, if the government deemed it required such supply.¹⁸⁸ Further, while the bond applied to vessels across the province, the Council specifically resolved that their order should be specifically sent to Mines and Chignecto, the two largest grain producing settlements in the colony,¹⁸⁹ informing them of the new law regarding grain transport.¹⁹⁰ Clearly, this order was intended to limit illegal trade outside of the colony and build firm control of the export of agricultural goods.

Again, the question as to whether or not the Council could effectively enforce their order is up for debate. Given the relatively small military presence in Nova Scotia and the fact that illegal trade networks were already operational, it seems unlikely that the government would have been able to enforce this order across the board; however, its mere existence as the Council's second ever piece of legislation also emphasizes that the government was interested in Nova Scotia's agricultural industry, its economic potential, and the basic concerns that the industry represented for the province's food security in general. Further, from the port at Annapolis Royal, the Council could oversee the activities of many merchants who conducted trade with the Acadians and relied on their trade goods and labour for economic success,¹⁹¹ ensuring that their order was at least somewhat enforceable.

¹⁸⁸ Council minutes, 27 April 1720, in MacMechan, *NSA III*, 2-3.

¹⁸⁹ For a detailed description of each major settlement in Nova Scotia in 1720 and their agricultural production, among other notable descriptors, see Paul Mascarene, "Description of Nova Scotia by Paul Mascarene," 1720, 104282, reel 9121, image 130-153, Colonial Office: Nova Scotia and Cape Breton, Original Correspondence (CO 217), Public Archives Canada, Ottawa (hereafter CO 217: C-9121).

¹⁹⁰ Council minutes, 27 April 1720, in MacMechan, *NSA III*, 2.

¹⁹¹ See Adams et al., *Inhabitants and Merchants of Annapolis Royal to Doucett*, 5 Feb 1718, image 1178-1181, CO 217: C-9120.

Oversee the merchants of Annapolis Royal the council did, and immediately too. On the same day that the Council's first legislative actions were passed, merchant James Blin "'begg'd leaue to supply the Inhabitants of Seconecto with some Grain, which he had promised them last fall as he sayd,'" resulting in a resolution that he could carry 50 hogsheads of wheat to Chignecto to supply the people there.¹⁹² As this request coincided with the Council's decision to alert the settlements of Mines and Chignecto of the new laws surrounding grain, it was also decided that Blin would provide the inhabitants of Chignecto with a description of the Council's decisions regarding the new granary and the bond required to transport grain.¹⁹³ In this case, Blin sought approval from the nascent Council before fulfilling his promise to transport the grain he had promised to bring to Chignecto, demonstrating the growing authority of the Nova Scotian government, particularly with regard to the trade of agricultural goods. At the very least, Blin's actions highlight a growing awareness in Annapolis Royal and Nova Scotia more broadly of the government and its policies, allowing the Council to begin implicating itself in everyday activities regarding agriculture, trade, and food security.

Capitalizing on the convenience of Blin's trip and its potential to resolve the list of problems they faced, the Council also assigned Blin to deliver a letter to the inhabitants of Chignecto and Mines detailing orders from Philipps to send four deputies to Annapolis Royal, where they would be required to sign an unconditional oath of allegiance to the British Crown on behalf of all Acadian inhabitants from Chignecto. John Adams, a Council member and merchant,

¹⁹² Council minutes, 27 April 1720, in MacMechan, *NSA III*, 3. A hogshead is a unit of measurement referring to a large cask or barrel. Short form hhd or hhds.

¹⁹³ Council minutes, 28 April 1720, in MacMechan, *NSA III*, 3.

was also assigned to carry out this task.¹⁹⁴ Another request of the same nature was given to Father Justinian Durand and addressed “To the Inhabitants of the River of Annapolis,” although this letter ordered that six deputies be sent to speak with Philipps regarding an oath of allegiance for those Acadians settled along the river.¹⁹⁵ While the letters all guaranteed religious freedoms, continued land ownership, and civil rights to individuals who bound themselves to the Crown as British subjects by taking the oath of allegiance,¹⁹⁶ the letter sent with Blin to Chignecto included an extra statement grounded in the Council’s new regulations regarding grain. Philipps specifically added that he had demonstrated his willingness to serve the people of Chignecto by allowing Blin “to transport from Menis, &ce 50 hhds of Wheat to be sold to you for your subsistence without his being obliged to come back first to this port,”¹⁹⁷ which the new grain regulations disallowed. Blin should have been required to return to Annapolis Royal to give a bond and offer the grain he was transporting for the purchase by the government before carrying on to Chignecto. Philipps concluded with the somewhat ominous statement that “as you shall deserve, you shall find further proof of my kindness,” suggesting that the population of Chignecto would need to meet the Governor’s expectations of their conduct—particularly with regard to the oath of allegiance—if they hoped to continue receiving trade goods needed for their subsistence.

¹⁹⁴ Council minutes, 28 April 1720, in MacMechan, *NSA III*, 3.

¹⁹⁵ Richard Philipps to the Inhabitants of the River of Annapolis, 30 April 1720, in Akins, *Selections*, 22-23.

¹⁹⁶ Richard Philipps to the Inhabitants of Menis and Places Adjacent, 28 April 1720, in Akins, *Selections*, 21-22; Richard Philipps to the Inhabitants of Chegnecto, 28 April 1720, in Akins, *Selections*, 22.

¹⁹⁷ Richard Philipps to the Inhabitants of Chignecto, 28 April 1720, in Akins, *Selections*, 22.

Notably, Griffiths has argued that “[w]hile the question of the oath of allegiance was of central concern to Philipps and his administration at this time, and was the background for all other issues in the colony, it was not the sole problem which they had to face in the summer of 1720.”¹⁹⁸ While Griffiths' general assessment cannot be faulted she ignores the issue in the background of the Oath of Allegiance: food security. As has already been established, the British needed to assure food security for themselves in Nova Scotia, encouraging them to seek an unconditional oath of allegiance from the Acadians as a guarantee that they would have access to Acadian agricultural products at all times, including during potential conflicts with the French. The Acadians, for their part, continued to see no reason to offer the British an unconditional oath of allegiance when the Council convened in 1720, causing Philipps and the Council to try to shift the scales.

The manipulation of the Council's second ever piece of legislation to coerce an oath of allegiance from the Acadians at Chignecto, combined with their order for the construction of a granary at Annapolis Royal for the storage of any grain produced in excess of families' subsistence needs, demonstrates that Philipps and the Council were actively attempting to regulate grain production, transport, trade, and storage in order to achieve the sociopolitical and socioeconomic goals they felt would stabilize Nova Scotia: achieving oaths of allegiance from the Acadian population, ensuring food security for Nova Scotian inhabitants—such as those at the garrison in Annapolis Royal—who could not produce enough grain for their subsistence, and limiting illegal trade. While the oath of allegiance was a clear interest for the Council, it was motivated by a desire for province-wide food security and encouraged the Council to create

¹⁹⁸ Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 281.

legislation for the regulation of grain production, transport, trade, and storage that—among other things—hid a veiled threat to Acadian food security in the event that the Acadians did not take the oath of allegiance.

Of note, Philipps' original demand for an oath of allegiance allowed the Acadians four months to respond with their oaths, after which point any person who had not sworn an oath would be expelled from Nova Scotia. When the Acadians resisted the oath, Philipps was forced to let the issue lie given the garrison's reliance on Acadian provisions, the small number of soldiers he actually had at his disposal, and brewing tension with the Mi'kmaq, who the Acadians might join if Philipps were to expel them.¹⁹⁹ In 1720, Philipps clarified his reasons for treating the issue of allegiance delicately in a letter to British authorities, stating that "the lands at Minas which afford great quantities of wheat yearly, and the best farms as yet in the Country, are liable to be all drown'd by cutting a dyke, which the Inhabitants at going off will not want ill nature to do." If the Acadians were to leave their land, they might drown the fertile marshland farms they had dyked and cultivated, wreaking havoc for the food security of the garrison at Annapolis Royal and others in Nova Scotia by drastically decreasing the province's grain yield.²⁰⁰ While Philipps did not achieve an oath of allegiance in 1720²⁰¹—probably in part because he did not yet have the means to effectively enforce the regulations the Council legislated or mitigate the risks

¹⁹⁹ Faragher, 153-156. Also see Wicken, Wicken, *Mi'kmaq Treaties on Trial: History, Land, and Donald Marshal Junior*.

²⁰⁰ Philipps to Secretary of State W. Craggs, 26 May 1720, image 1639-1640, CO 217: C-9120.

²⁰¹ For an example of a response to Philipps request, see Inhabitants of Mines to Philipps, May 1720, in Akins, *Selections*, 28-29. For a summary of Philipps efforts to achieve an oath of allegiance from the Acadians and their responses to them, see Richard Philipps to Secretary of State W. Craggs, 26 May 1720, image 1630-1642, CO 217: C-9120.

of doing so—British thinking around food security in Nova Scotia was clear. If the oath of allegiance “was the background for all other issues in the colony,”²⁰² then food security—as the foundational factor of British need to elicit an unconditional oath of allegiance from the Acadians—was unequivocally the key undercurrent of issues throughout Nova Scotia. As the Council’s first two pieces of legislation indicate, Nova Scotia’s new government fully understood this reality.

The British Vision of Nova Scotia’s Agricultural Industry

While Philipps and the Council were focused on promoting solutions to problems that had plagued Nova Scotia for nearly a decade, they were also focused on the larger picture of ensuring that the province thrived in the long-term. The Council’s first two pieces of legislation are indicative of this forward thinking attitude in that they aimed to promote food security, limit illegal trade of agricultural goods, and achieve an oath of allegiance from Acadian inhabitants in the province to unify its citizenry under one controlled banner; however, a report by Paul Mascarene, a member of the Council described by Philipps as the province’s Chief Engineer,²⁰³ profiled the province’s challenges and long-term potential, particularly with regard to its agricultural industry, demonstrating that Nova Scotia’s government was thinking beyond the immediate problems it faced as it continued to establish itself and form legislation.²⁰⁴

²⁰² Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 281.

²⁰³ Philipps, “Names and Qualifications of his Majesty’s Council for the Province of Nova Scotia,” May 1720, image 1653, CO 217: C-9120.

²⁰⁴ Mascarene, “Description of Nova Scotia by Paul Mascarene,” 1720, image 130-153, CO 217: C-9121. Philipps transmitted Mascarene’s report to the Board of Trade on 26 Sept 1720, but the report itself can only be dated to the year of 1720.

By 1720, Mascarene had a breadth of experience in Nova Scotia that had been permitted in part by his unique upbringing as the son to a Huguenot father exiled from France to Holland and a Catholic mother, the latter of whom raised him in the South of France until his upbringing was taken over by his paternal relatives when he was ten years old.²⁰⁵ Mascarene became a British subject in 1706 and became a lieutenant in the British Army. In 1709, he joined Vetch's expedition against Canada and l'Acadie during the War of Spanish Succession, and was promoted to the rank of Major for his performance during the siege of Fort Royal in 1710. In British-occupied Acadia, Mascarene's familiarity with Catholicism and his French-language capacity made him indispensable to Vetch as an intermediary with the French inhabitants, meaning that Mascarene was largely responsible for diplomatic dealings with the Acadians when Vetch commanded British forces in Acadia between 1710 and 1713 and travelled to major Acadian settlements.²⁰⁶ Mascarene continued building his career in Nova Scotia and Placentia after the French colonies were officially ceded to the British in 1713,²⁰⁷ qualifying him as the best of the Council's members to write a description of the situation in Nova Scotia in 1720.

Mascarene's report is thorough, beginning by emphasizing that dispute over Nova Scotia's border dating to the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 had not yet been resolved by the British and French governments in and near Nova Scotia. As a caveat to the borders he lays out, Mascarene warned that he could only describe "[t]he extent of the Province of Nova Scotia or Accadie, according to the Notion the Britains have of it,"²⁰⁸ revealing the depth of tension that

²⁰⁵ Faragher, 126-127.

²⁰⁶ Faragher, 127-131; Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 240-241.

²⁰⁷ Faragher, 141-145, 155.

²⁰⁸ Mascarene, "Description of Nova Scotia by Paul Mascarene," 1720, image 130, CO 217: C-9121.

remained in the region regarding Nova Scotia's true borders. Mascarene then moved on to less political matters, describing Nova Scotia's climate as "cold and very Variable," but without negative impacts on soil fertility.²⁰⁹ He noted that Nova Scotia's soil "may be easily made to produce all the supply of life for the inhabitants" in the forms of "Wheat, Rye, Barley, Oats, all manner of pulse, garden roots and Herbs" as well as maintaining cattle and fowl off the land.²¹⁰ In addition to its agricultural potential, Mascarene noted that Nova Scotia was rich in natural resources, with many varieties of good timber available, as well as iron, and copper near Cape Doré, coal from operational mines in Chignecto, and soft stone from a quarry there too.²¹¹ Additionally, feathers, furs, and cod made up a good portion of the trade in Nova Scotia.²¹²

Mascarene's description of the province truly shone when he began to discuss the "four considerable Settlements on the South side of the Bay of Fundy,"²¹³ which—from the British perspective—marked a boundary between British and French territory.²¹⁴ The four settlements included Annapolis Royal, Mines, Chignecto, and Cobeguit, each largely populated by Acadians and Indigenous persons who continued to be disloyal to the British Crown. That said, Mascarene echoed Vetch and Caulfeild's thinking circa 1714 regarding the necessity of keeping the

²⁰⁹ Mascarene, "Description of Nova Scotia by Paul Mascarene," 1720, image 131, CO 217: C-9121.

²¹⁰ Mascarene, "Description of Nova Scotia by Paul Mascarene," 1720, image 131, CO 217: C-9121.

²¹¹ Mascarene, "Description of Nova Scotia by Paul Mascarene," 1720, image 131-132, CO 217: C-9121.

²¹² Mascarene, "Description of Nova Scotia by Paul Mascarene," 1720, image 131-132, CO 217: C-9121.

²¹³ Mascarene, "Description of Nova Scotia by Paul Mascarene," 1720, image 133, CO 217: C-9121.

²¹⁴ Mascarene, "Description of Nova Scotia by Paul Mascarene," 1720, image 130, CO 217: C-9121.

Acadians in Nova Scotia, citing the well-trodden fear that the Acadians might join the French in Ile Royale as a primary reason for retaining them in Nova Scotia as well as the fact that the Acadians could provide “necessaries for erecting fortification, and for English Settlements and keeping on the stock of cattle, and the lands tilled, till the English are powerful enough of themselves to go on.”²¹⁵ This angle is somewhat fresh: in addition to providing agricultural goods and labour, the Acadians had saw mills that they might destroy if they left the province, which would slow the construction of any English settlements and limit English ability to fortify their positions.²¹⁶ Still, given that the British could not depend on Acadian allegiance, British reliance on their presence in the colony posed a strategic risk that Mascarene argued could only be alleviated by settling the province without delay by increasing the number of troops in the area to force an oath of allegiance from the Acadians, while also providing free land and cattle to any incoming British settlers to encourage them to settle in Nova Scotia.²¹⁷

By actioning the steps he proposed, Mascarene argued the British Empire would finally “reap the benefit” of Nova Scotia, which he quickly makes clear he locates in the agricultural potential of land more than anywhere else.²¹⁸ Discussing the four main settlements in the Bay of Fundy region of Nova Scotia, Mascarene builds a careful case for the ways in which their agricultural industries could be grown. In Annapolis Royal, dyked farms were incredibly fruitful,

²¹⁵ Mascarene, “Description of Nova Scotia by Paul Mascarene,” 1720, image 134-135, CO 217: C-9121.

²¹⁶ Mascarene, “Description of Nova Scotia by Paul Mascarene,” 1720, image 135, CO 217: C-9121.

²¹⁷ Mascarene, “Description of Nova Scotia by Paul Mascarene,” 1720, image 135-138, CO 217: C-9121.

²¹⁸ Mascarene, “Description of Nova Scotia by Paul Mascarene,” 1720, image 137, CO 217: C-9121.

but Mascarene suggested that the area should be more densely populated and farmed more extensively given its agricultural potential and high food yield.²¹⁹ Mines boasted a large dyked common meadow, many cattle, and “might be made the Granary not only of this Province but also of the neighbouring Governments,” particularly if undyked sections of the meadowland were to be dyked and cultivated.²²⁰ Cobeguit had seen good agricultural success with grain and cattle, and enjoyed frequent trade with Indigenous peoples, but it only boasted about 50 families. It was only 12 leagues from Mines, had communication with Chignecto by river, and traded illegally with the French across the Bay of Vert in the St. Lawrence Gulf.²²¹ Clearly, increased British presence in the area would be a boon for Nova Scotia by allowing more cultivation of the land there and by discouraging trade with the French. Chignecto was also well connected, maintaining communication with Mines by river and engaging in illicit trade with the French as well. Given the settlement’s high levels of grain production and a large population of cattle, Mascarene proposed that it could support a small fort of approximately 150 men who could help to more entrench British presence in the area.²²²

In every settlement, agricultural production or its potential was a strong argument for British settlement and, as Mascarene implied, an indicator that Nova Scotia’s agriculture resources could be better leveraged to support the province. If Nova Scotia truly could support

²¹⁹ Mascarene, “Description of Nova Scotia by Paul Mascarene,” 1720, image 140-142, CO 217: C-9121.

²²⁰ Mascarene, “Description of Nova Scotia by Paul Mascarene,” 1720, image 145-146, CO 217: C-9121.

²²¹ Mascarene, “Description of Nova Scotia by Paul Mascarene,” 1720, image 148, CO 217: C-9121.

²²² Mascarene, “Description of Nova Scotia by Paul Mascarene,” 1720, image 149-151, CO 217: C-9121.

enough agriculture to produce agricultural goods from its own land in the amounts necessary to achieve subsistence at a province-level, build up stores of grain, and trade its excess grain with neighbouring governments, its agricultural industry had the potential to ensure sustainable food security as the province grew. As Mascarene implicitly argued, this very potential justified investing in Nova Scotia by settling British subjects there as he suggested.²²³ Not only did Nova Scotia's agricultural industry have the potential to make the province profitable for the British Empire, but it could also stabilize the region by ensuring food security within the province and improving the food security of nearby regions through its agricultural industry.

Mascarene's careful observations of Acadian settlements and agriculture as well as his suggestions for future British settlement in the region, which Philipps sent to the Board of Trade, should not be dismissed in the tumult of everyday decisions facing the Council. Given Philipps' involvement in reading and passing on Mascarene's description of Nova Scotia as well as Mascarene's position on the Council, it stands to reason that his observations of agricultural potential within the colony directed the Council's thinking and may have influenced the legislation it produced. In fact, Mascarene's observations, presented in their considered description of the province, demonstrate that Nova Scotia's government was looking beyond the socioeconomic and sociopolitical concerns represented in their legislative actions and day-to-day dealings and turning their attention towards the raw potential of the province's agricultural industry to make Nova Scotia a sustainable and lucrative province for the British empire.

²²³ Mascarene, "Description of Nova Scotia by Paul Mascarene," 1720, image 135-151, CO 217: C-9121.

Looking Forward to Agricultural Policies and Regulation After 1720

Mascarene's description of Nova Scotia's agricultural potential combined the grain regulations that constituted the Council's first ever legislative actions suggests that the Nova Scotian government's thinking around food security and the agricultural industry were aimed both at (1) solving the immediate problems of the time and ensuring that Nova Scotia developed as a sustainable province with enough agriculture to ensure subsistence; and (2) fulfilling its potential to be "the Granary not only of this Province but also of the neighbouring Governments."²²⁴ In considering the Council's initial legislative actions and their hopes for Nova Scotia's agricultural industry, Philipps' efforts to acquire oaths of allegiance from the Acadians become important once again, even though he was unsuccessful. When Philipps ordered Acadian settlements to send deputies to Annapolis Royal in 1720 to take the oath of allegiance on behalf of the people in their respective settlements,²²⁵ he revived a system of delegates that first emerged out of Mascarene's diplomatic efforts during the military occupation of Acadia overseen by Vetch in 1710. Faced with the problem that many people could not congregate at Annapolis Royal to have their voices heard due to distance and agricultural obligations at home, Mascarene had selected eight Acadian representatives from various settlements to represent the whole Acadian population when necessary.²²⁶ While the legality of this system was questioned during Nicholson's time as governor,²²⁷ it evolved over time until, after 1720, Acadian deputies sent to

²²⁴ Mascarene, "Description of Nova Scotia by Paul Mascarene," 1720, image 145-146, CO 217: C-9121.

²²⁵ Philipps to the Inhabitants of Menis and Places Adjacent, 28 Apr 1720, in Akins, *Selections*, 21-22; Philipps to the Inhabitants of Chegnecto, 28 Apr 1720, in Akins, *Selections*, 22; and Philipps to the Inhabitants of the River of Annapolis, 30 April 1720, in Akins, *Selections*, 22-23.

²²⁶ Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 240-241.

²²⁷ Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 241-242

Annapolis Royal and recognized by the Council executed the Council's orders in their communities, acted as arbitrators for local disagreements both in their settlements and at Annapolis Royal if needed, collected information regarding land disputes for the Council, and eventually were given the authority to settle land disputes at a local level in 1732.²²⁸

Griffiths has argued that the use of this delegate system to streamline the governance of Nova Scotia allowed an Acadian political leadership to emerge in Nova Scotia and limited opportunities for interactions between the Acadians and the British, except in some cases where Acadian individuals sought to appeal deputies' decisions to the Council at Annapolis Royal;²²⁹ however, such occasions in addition to policies related to Nova Scotia's agricultural industry from 1720 onwards saw increased British involvement in the daily lives of Acadians and forced them to engage with British institutions regarding judicial, political, and regulatory matters, deputies notwithstanding. Further research should focus on the specific ways in which the Council utilized their legislative power and the delegate system to create laws regulating issues related to agriculture and food security after 1720.

With the Council and delegate system in place, the British government in Nova Scotia also became vocal regarding the maintenance of dykes and continuation of the Acadian aboteaux system. By the mid-1720s, the Council had given orders that dykes, fences, and related agrotechnology be maintained by Acadian inhabitants in good working order, lest those

²²⁸ Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 307-308.

²²⁹ Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian*, 240, 307-309. Faragher takes a more conservative approach to this issue, noting that the deputy system provided Acadians with an opportunity to voice their opinions, but that the Council directed them rather than deliberating with them in all matter. Faragher, 155.

inhabitants forfeit their rights to their land or be fined for failing to properly upkeep them.²³⁰ Similar orders were pervasive throughout the 1730s, and began to implicate the Council in issues of land transfer and ownership that had generally been conducted within communities using an Acadian system reflective of older French seigniorial systems in the past.²³¹ As a result, opportunities for Acadians to interact with Britons increased, but such interactions took place within British institutions where Acadian agency was limited. Parallel circumstances began to emerge among indigenous communities, particularly after the region's first Peace and Friendship Treaty between the Mi'kmaq, Maliseet, Passamaquoddy, and the British entered into force in 1726, increasing British influence over indigenous peoples' land use and trade in Nova Scotia

²³⁰ See "Petition presented by James Michell Advised," 26 May 1724, in MacMechan, *NSA III*, 54-55; "The ffrench Inhabitants Examined about repairing their Marshes," 1 Jun 1724, in MacMechan, *NSA III*, 55-56.

²³¹ See "Order for Repairing the Dykes of Piziquid," 17 Apr 1735, in *Nova Scotia Archives II: A Calendar of Two Letter-Books and One Commission Book in the Possession of the Government of Nova Scotia, 1713-1741*, Archibald M. MacMechan, ed. (Halifax: Herald Printing House, 1900) (hereafter MacMechan, *NSA II*), 205-206; "The measures Dykes & fences to be kept in good repair," 1 Jun 1735, in MacMechan, *NSA III*, 318; "The Dispute between René Blanchard & Celestine, &ca in relation to Some land," 26 Apr 1735, in MacMechan, *NSA III*, 320-321, "The Deputyys Report upon the Dispute been Blanchard & Celestine &ca," 9 May 1735, in MacMechan, *NSA III*, 323; and "Order for Keeping Dykes &c., in Repair," 5 Mar 1735/6, in MacMechan, *NSA II*, 208.

too.²³² In all cases, food security continued as a lightning rod issue with which Acadians, Britons, and indigenous peoples could negotiate and threaten, producing British legislation that sought to improve Nova Scotia's stability through agricultural policy and food security.

Regardless, the legislative power and thinking around agriculture that solidified in Nova Scotia in 1720 finally saw British authorities well-situated to improve the province's agricultural industry towards their vision of food production levels fit for province-wide subsistence and lucrative inter-colony trade as sociopolitical and socioeconomic concerns had to be negotiated through growing British institutions under the Council. As the Acadians had noted in 1714, Nova Scotia was capable of producing more than enough provisions for the subsistence of the entire

²³² See William Wicken, *Mi'kmaq Treaties on Trial*, 25-162 95-100 for detailed discussion of the 1726 Treaty. Wicken has also argued that that the Treaty of 1726 represents Mi'kmaq acknowledgment of changes to their world since the Treaty of Utrecht as it saw Mi'kmaq voluntarily enter into an agreement that limited their own actions and increased their visibility: Mi'kmaq leaders agreed to mediate conflicts with British subjects with the Nova Scotia Council in Annapolis Royal rather than take independently seek redress with the involved parties, while the British agreed that Mi'kmaq communities would retain their fishing, hunting, and gathering rights without interference from British authorities. See William Wicken, "Mi'kmaq Decisions: Antonine Tecouenemac, the Conquest, and the Treaty of Utrecht," in Reid et al, *The "Conquest" of Acadia, 1710: Imperial, Colonial, and Aboriginal Constructions*, 95-100. Also see Geoffrey Plank, *An Unsettled Conflict: The British Campaign Against the Peoples of Acadia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003) and Daniel N. Paul, *We Were Not the Savages: A Mi'kmaq Perspective on the Collision Between European and Native American Civilizations* (Halifax: Fernwood, 2000) for more information regarding Peace and Friendship Treaties and their application. Negotiated in the Maritimes and Gaspé between, 1726 and 1779, the Peace and Friendship treaties were made between the Wabanaki political alliance—composed of the Mi'kmaq, the Maliseet, the Passamaquoddy, and the allied groups who formed the Abenaki—and the British in order to secure trade relations between the groups. From an Indigenous perspective, the treaties also served to protect their rights to their lands and traditions, including hunting and fishing. From a British perspective, they ensured that indigenous populations in the Maritimes would not bear arms against them, defined boundaries between the two groups, and protected existing and future British settlements.

colony:²³³ by 1720 the British had the pieces in place to make this prediction a reality shaped to reflect their own aspirations.

²³³ Beliveau et al., "Petition des Acadiens a Messrs les Malouins pour obtenir la protection du Roy de France," 10 Oct 1714, image 220, Amérique septentrionale: C-10216.

Conclusion

Food security was a foundational issue in Nova Scotia during the conquest era, forcing British authorities to consider how to subsist without a substantial – and loyal -- British settler presence between 1710 and 1720. In the geopolitical landscape of Acadia, Nova Scotia, and nearby French colonies such as Île Royale, food security directed British enforcement of the Treaty of Utrecht's terms after 1713, heightened concerns regarding Acadians' allegiance to the British, and shaped early agricultural policy and regulation by an evolving British regime in Nova Scotia.

This study first evaluated the importance of food security in establishing early British policies for the governance of Nova Scotia. Debates around these issues, involving French, British, and Acadian actors, began with the Treaty of Utrecht and initially centred around the accord's fourteenth article. Food security was an immediate concern for British authorities after conquering Acadia, and directed British policies to protect the Acadian population within Nova Scotia as a source of agricultural knowledge and labour after the treaty came into force. While British actions were somewhat motivated by a desire to weaken French strength on Île Royal, they were also informed by concerns regarding the food security of the colony.

Chapter Three shifted focus from higher level policy debates and their implications for governance to evaluate the situation on the ground in Nova Scotia during the conquest era. This chapter examined correspondence between British authorities, Acadians, and English merchants to understand how food security impacted day-to-day life in Nova Scotia. It demonstrated that Nova Scotia's administrators and its small British population shared concerns about food

security. As such, key aspects of British governance in Nova Scotia during the conquest era, such as their attempts to elicit an unconditional oath of allegiance from the Acadians, were rooted in fears regarding colonial sustenance. In particular, administrators worried that Acadian neutrality or support for the French in an imperial conflict would jeopardize access to Acadian agriculture. At the same time, British authorities in Nova Scotia recognized the economic opportunity and commercial value constituted in the marshlands' potential for intensified cultivation. Since the labour and knowledge of Acadians was crucial to realizing this potential, it was important to secure their unconditional allegiance to the British Crown.

Chapter Four demonstrated how British fears regarding food insecurity and its relationship to the oath of allegiance were manifested in agricultural policies and regulations by 1720 designed to increase British power, authority, and legitimacy in Nova Scotia in order to assert control over the agricultural industry there and to reduce Acadian capacity to act without deference to British institutions. The Council, Nova Scotia's first attempt at legislative government, was established in 1720 and immediately took measures to ensure food security, both by controlling agricultural goods and by achieving an unconditional oath of allegiance from the Acadians. The Council formed clear opinions on Nova Scotia's agricultural potential, particularly in Paul Mascarene's report on Nova Scotia in 1720, demonstrating that it was looking beyond the socioeconomic and sociopolitical concerns represented in their legislative actions and day-to-day dealings. Beyond their immediate concerns related to food security, the Council turned its attention towards the raw potential of the province's agricultural industry to make Nova Scotia a sustainable and lucrative province for the British empire.

Mi'kmaq, Wulstukwiuk (Maliseet), Passamaquoddy, and Penobscot peoples were all present in Nova Scotia during the conquest era and exercised agency throughout the colony. While their roles have not been addressed in any depth throughout this study, they can be observed, albeit from a Eurocentric perspective, within Acadian arguments against providing an oath of unconditional allegiance to the British Crown, and within British evaluations of those arguments. These representation do not do justice to the role indigenous peoples played in Nova Scotia during the conquest era; however, primary source material written from an indigenous perspective regarding the 1710-1720 period is minimal. After 1720, indigenous peoples in Nova Scotia—particularly the Mi'kmaq—became actively involved in geopolitical conflicts in the North Atlantic and in regional conflicts within Nova Scotia, many of which involved elements of food security.²³⁴ Future research should seek to center indigenous voices and experiences in the narrative of the conquest era and beyond, examining how indigenous peoples influenced food security, policy, and agricultural regulation in Nova Scotia.

Future studies should also consider if British authorities' focus on achieving food security forced Nova Scotia's agricultural industry away from Acadian subsistence aboiteaux agriculture and towards commercial agriculture to promote economic development and stability in the region throughout the eighteenth century and into the nineteenth century. It has been established that while British authorities held decision-making power regarding agricultural policies, they were dependant on Acadian agricultural labour for subsistence and the vitality of the agricultural industry within Nova Scotia; however, future studies should consider if increased British

²³⁴ See Paul, *We Were Not the Savages: A Mi'kmaq Perspective on the Collision Between European and Native American Civilizations* and Wicken, *Mi'kmaq Treaties on Trial*.

settlement after 1749 (beginning with the establishment of Halifax) changed existing dynamics between the British and Acadians regarding food security. It is plausible that settlement associated with the establishment of Halifax allowed British authorities decreased food-based interdependencies between Acadians and Britons in Nova Scotia, altering the socioeconomic and sociopolitical landscape of Nova Scotia by introducing it into the competitive imperial labour market. New competition for agricultural labour and products may have necessitated agricultural policies oriented towards shaping a commercial agricultural industry in Nova Scotia, which would have been in alignment with the potential the British government envisioned for Nova Scotia's agricultural industry by 1720.

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