Dressing Up the Past: Creating and Re-Creating Acadian Identity

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Abstract

During the early twentieth century, Acadian women dressed up in a costume based on the main character from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's 1847 epic poem *Evangeline* at nation-building events to symbolize the Acadian people and its past. Acadians came to consider the Evangeline costume to be the national and historic dress of their people. Yet their ancestors never wore this outfit. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Acadian settlers to what is today Canada's Maritime region instead developed a distinct style of dress based on a mix of local and external influences, which differentiated them from their French origins and from the colonists in other North American settlements by the time most of the population was deported from the region during the Seven Years' War. In the period following the Expulsion, Acadians continued to wear unique styles of dress which contributed to the sense of a distinct identity. Longfellow's *Evangeline* drew on the Romantic Movement, however, and its tendency to view rural dwellers as simple and picturesque peasants wearing exotic costumes. *Evangeline* led to a reimagining of the Acadians as they became widely associated with their description in the poem, in part due to the popularity with Norman peasant costumes evoked in the poem. This is the version of their past that Acadians chose to emphasize during the twentieth century.

This thesis traces the process of reimagining the Acadians' past that occurred during the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century through a study of representations of Acadian dress in popular culture by both outsiders and members of the community. This thesis intends to shed light on why the Evangeline costume has come to symbolize the Acadian people and their past. During the late nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, Acadians used *Evangeline* as a tool for nation building to bring together disparate communities to create a unified nation based on the values described in the poem. By wearing the costume and including it in nation-building events, Acadians portrayed the version of their history described in the poem. Additionally, it will be shown that even though the Evangeline costume does not reflect the historical record, Acadians preferred it because the costume represents what the community came to believe was a more suitable version of the past.

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Introduction

During the summer of 1955, Acadians across Canada's Maritime region and in Louisiana commemorated the bicentennial of the beginning of the Acadian Expulsion in 1755 with balls, pageants, and parades. Acadians are the descendants of seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century French settlers to the colony of Acadia, located in what is today the provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island. The destruction of communities and the deportation of most of the population by the British government at the outset of the Seven Years' War led to the death of approximately 8,000 Acadians, half of the population in 1755, due to diseases, exposure, and starvation. The event has gone on to be regarded as a great tragedy.[1] However, the events of 1955 focused on the triumphant survival during the years of exile, the successful re-establishment of Acadian communities in the Maritimes, and the establishment of communities in Louisiana after the Expulsion.[2] Central to the event were women wearing a costume that consisted of a laced bodice, a long skirt, and a high hat called a "Norman cap," during parades and performances. Known as the "Evangeline costume," this outfit symbolized national unity and the preservation of Acadian culture.

The Evangeline costume was based on the description of the outfit that the character Evangeline wore in the American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's 1847 epic poem *Evangeline,* which describes a fictional account of the Expulsion. The popularity of *Evangeline* during the late nineteenth century led to a reimagining of the Acadian people in popular culture

[1] John Mack Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme: The Tragic Story of the Expulsion of the French Acadians From Their American Homeland* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Co., 2005), 424.
[2] The terms "Acadian Expulsion" and "Acadian Deportation" are used interchangeably throughout this thesis.

as Longfellow's poem played into the interest in national peasantry and national peasant costumes that emerged in European and Euro-American society as part of the Romantic Movement, rooted in nostalgia for an idealized past. Longfellow indeed described the Acadians as simple Norman peasants living in a Golden Age before the Deportation. Acadians, like outsiders, associated the Acadian people with the poem's description and it was this version of their past that they chose to celebrate in the twentieth century. The Evangeline costume is symbolic of the Acadian people because it represents their identity and past as Acadians consider it to be the traditional women's outfit even though it was only adopted as the national costume during the early twentieth century. Clothing worn by actual Acadian women during the eighteenth century did not resemble the Evangeline costume. During the pre-Expulsion period, Acadian men and women developed a distinct style of dress based on local and external influences which differentiated them from their French origins and from other settlers in North American colonies. This thesis discusses how the dress Acadians wore during the pre-Expulsion period contributed to their sense of a distinct identity which led to the preservation of a unique culture after the Expulsion. When Acadians no longer used the Acadian style as frequently, they created an invented historical costume to symbolize a unique group with a distinct past that was worthy of celebration. Juxtaposing the dress the early Acadians wore with their invented costume reveals the significance of the created costume to their national identity.

In the seminal book *The Invention of Tradition*, co-edited by British historians Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, historian Hugh Trevor-Roper has described a similar phenomenon that occurred in Scotland during the nineteenth century. Although today many people in Scotland consider the kilt to be the national and historic Scottish dress, an Englishman invented its modern version after the union of Scotland with England in 1707. According to

Trevor-Roper, it only came to be remembered as a marker of Scottish identity and tradition during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries when educated upper-class members of the London Highland Society emphasized the use of what they considered to be ancient traditions even though Highlanders had never worn this specific garment.[3] Eric Hobsbawm has noted that "'[t]raditions' which appear or claim to be old are often quite recent in origin and sometimes invented" to create contemporary conventions that seek to "establish continuity with a suitable historic past."[4] In other words, societies create traditions to establish a version of a shared past that matches a social group's contemporary values, aspirations, and ideals, thus causing members to consider the imagined traditions to be more appealing or "suitable" than the group's actual past. For the nineteenth-century and twentieth-century Acadians, why was a constructed memory of the past based on Longfellow's version a more suitable past and why did they choose to represent themselves with an historic costume that did not correspond to the historical record?

Recent studies have examined why some communities have used invented costumes to celebrate a preferred version of their past and to create a group identity based on a constructed memory. Alesdair Brooks and Natascha Mehler have discussed Bavaria's use of costumes based on romanticized versions of older styles of dress during the 1930s to display what Bavarians believed was a more suitable demonstration of Bavarian national identity.[5] Nathalie Hamel and Raphaël Trottier have studied how the government of Quebec created traditional folk costumes during the twentieth century to represent a chosen identity based on the recreation of an idealized

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[3] Hugh Trevor-Roper, "The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland," in *The Invention of Tradition,* Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 15-41.
[4] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1-14.
[5] Alesdair Brooks and Natascha Mehler, "The Historical Archaeology of Nationalism in Scotland and Bavaria," in *The Country Where My Heart Is: Historical Archaeologies of Nationalism and National Identity,* Alesdair Brooks and Natascha Mehler (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 2017), 22-24.

version of the past.[6] American historian and geographer David Lowenthal has noted that the past is often reinvented so that it matches what contemporaries wish it had been, rather than what it was. According to David Lowenthal, "[a]t its best, historical fabrication is both creative art and act of faith. By means of it we tell ourselves who we are, where we came from, and to what we belong."[7] Therefore, the past reflects what societies want themselves to have been based on their contemporary beliefs. This thesis intends to add to this growing interest in the way that nations have manipulated the past through inventing historic dress to create a group identity with a suitable historic past.

One of the foremost historians of the Acadians in the eighteenth century, Naomi Griffiths, argues that unique religious beliefs, politics, economic practices, and social customs progressively formed a distinct Acadian identity in pre-Expulsion Acadia.[8] This thesis argues that dress similarly contributed to the creation of a unique group identity in Acadia. Dress is a social custom and an identity marker. Humans use clothing to demonstrate their adherence to a social group and to communicate their place within that society. Further, societies use dress to display the group's beliefs and to set the community apart as having a distinct culture. American historian Laurel Thatcher Ulrich has claimed that textiles tell stories because they carry cultural meanings and messages. For example, in colonial America, a woman's headdress not only denoted femininity, but signified modesty and submissiveness.[9] Building on the growing interest

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[6] Nathalie Hamel, "Coordonner l'artisanat et le tourisme, ou comment mettre en valeur le visage pittoresque du Québec (1915-1960)," *Histoire sociale/Social History* 34, no. 67 (2001): 97-114; Raphaël Trottier, "Mettre en scène le Canada-français: Les costumes traditionnels dans les ensembles de danse folklorique au Québec," PhD diss., Concordia University, 2017. Accessed February 15, 2020, https://spectrum.library.concordia.ca/982740/1/Trottier_Ma_F2017.pdf.

[7] David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country-Revisited* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 499-502.

[8] N.E.S. Griffiths, *The Contexts of Acadian History, 1686-1784* (Montreal, QC: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014), 33.

[9] Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, "Cloth, Clothing, and Early American Social History." *Dress* 18, no. 1 (1991): 39–48, https://doi.org/10.1179/036121191803657188.

in material culture history, cultural historian Karen Harvey has noted that object-based studies can add evidence to historical studies because objects convey the "often unspoken beliefs and assumptions of a society." Harvey argues that people do not just give objects meanings, but that objects themselves have agency. An object's shape, function, and decoration play a role in determining human experiences and identities.[10]

Longfellow's poem *Evangeline* became popular during the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. During this time, scholarship on the Acadians described them as the isolated peasants in the poem, which led to stereotypical images of simple farmers wearing coarse homespun garments.[11] However, work by historians, such as Jean Daigle, have shattered the myth of isolation by demonstrating that the Acadians were well-connected to local trade with New England, which enabled them to import goods.[12] Similarly, Régis Brun's analysis of the socioeconomic conditions in five different regions of pre-Expulsion Acadia sheds light on how Acadians wore a combination of homemade and imported garments through cultivation and coastal trade. However, Brun's study only includes a few pages on the subject and does not elaborate on the types of clothing Acadians wore.[13]

There is a rich history of scholarship on the major events in Acadia during the pre-Expulsion period. Historians such as Naomi Griffiths, Bona Arsenault, Carl Brasseaux, Georges Arsenault, and Gregory Kennedy have tackled studies on the socio-political life in pre-Expulsion

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[10] Karen Harvey, "Introduction: historians, material culture and materiality," in *History and Material Culture: A Student's Guide to Approaching Alternative Sources,* Karen Harvey, 1-26, Second Edition, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2017, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315165776.

[11] Hilary J. Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy': Clothing, community, and identity among the Neutral French, c. 1670-1750," (PhD diss., Dalhousie University, 2019), 1, accessed February 21, 2020, https://scholar.googleusercontent.com/scholar?q=cache:I1fpuNmTUZYJ:scholar.google.com/+"'The+Acadian+of+our+Fancy':+Clothing,+community,+and+identity+among+the+Neutral+French,+c.+1670-1750&hl=en&as_sdt=0,5.

[12] Jean Daigle, "Nos Amis Les Ennemis: Relations Commerciales de l'Acadie avec le Massachusetts, 1670-1711," (PhD diss., University of Maine, 1975), 199, accessed October 22, 2020, ProQuest (7618261).

[13] Régis Brun, *The Acadians Before 1755,* (Milton, ON: Global Heritage Press, 2012), vii.

and post-Expulsion Acadian communities in Canada and Louisiana. Scholars such as John Mack Faragher, Naomi Griffiths, Christopher Hodson, and Bona Arseneault have discussed the causes and consequences of the Deportation. While many of these texts include brief descriptions of the types of textiles Acadians wore, dress is not the focus of these works.[14] Naomi Griffiths has noted that "a detailed synthesis of what has recently become known about material culture is much needed."[15]

During the 1960s and 1970s, Parks Canada commissioned non-academic research reports on material culture history at a number of historic sites across Canada for costume animation programs. However, only a few have touched on aspects of early Acadian dress.[16] Perceiving this need for a closer examination of Acadian clothing, historical costume specialist Hilary Doda, in her 2019 dissertation, conducted a study of dress during the pre-Deportation period. Doda looked at documentary evidence, such as travel journals, trade records, and probate inventories, in addition to archaeological evidence connected with textile use and production, to gain a better understanding of the types of fabrics used in garments, the different styles of dress that Acadians wore, and the use of imported garments in the settler's wardrobes. Doda's findings show that Acadians drew from local resources to create articles of clothing while also actively participating in local and international trade networks to obtain textiles and accessories.[17] Doda has demonstrated that the Acadians were much more connected to European fashion than historians

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[14] See Griffiths, *The Contexts of Acadian History,* 32; Bona Arsenault, *Histoire des Acadiens* (Saint-Laurent, QC: Fides, 2018); Carl A. Brasseaux, *The Founding of New Acadia* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1987); Georges Arsenault, *Les Acadiens de l'Ile: 1720-1980* (Moncton NB: Les Editions d'Acadie, 1987), 101; Gregory Kennedy, *Something of a Peasant Paradise?: Comparing Rural Societies in Acadie and the Loudunais, 1604-1755* (Montreal, QC: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014); Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme*; Christopher Hodson, *The Acadian Diaspora: An Eighteenth-Century History* (NY: Oxford University Press, 2012).
[15] Griffiths, *The Contexts of Acadian History,* 32; Brun, *The Acadians Before 1755,* 32.
[16] See C. James Taylor, "Parks Canada Manuscript Report Series," *Archivaria* 12 (Summer 1981): 65-119 and E.M. Razzolini, "Costume Research and Reproduction at Louisbourg," *Material History Bulletin* 14 (1982): 59-65.
[17] Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 4-5.

had previously believed, although the combination of European and local influences varied between settlements. However, there is much more to be explored. By analyzing dress during both the pre-Expulsion and the post-Expulsion period, we can see continuity over time periods and similarities in styles between settlements that can sometimes be assumed to extend backwards.

Although scholarship on nineteenth-century Acadian dress is similarly sparse, there has been some interest in post-Expulsion ways of life since the mid twentieth century. In 1965 Madame William Deveau interviewed elderly women in the town of Chéticamp, Nova Scotia on the styles of dress they remembered men and women wearing when they were young, to try to reconstruct the Acadian costume.[18] In addition, in the 1990s Jeanne Arseneault published a short report on late eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century clothing for the costume program at the Village Historique Acadien in Caraquet, New Brunswick.[19] Similarly, Jean-Claude Dupont's *Histoire Populaire de l'Acadie* covers various aspects of material culture including a short discussion on nineteenth-century dress and early twentieth-century dress in rural communities.[20] The dress of the Acadians who resettled in Louisiana after the Expulsion has also attracted some interest. Sonya Lacomb analyzed succession records between the years 1765 and 1819 in the Attakapas District, an Acadian area in Louisiana, to determine the most common types of garments that Acadians owned during this period.[21]

While these accounts note the use of distinct Acadian styles, they do not question whether there was change over time as they have assumed that dress remained static and

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[18] Mme William Deveau, "Vêtements acadiens d'autrefois," *Les Cahiers de la Société Historique Acadienne* 1, no. 7 (March 1965): 26-28.
[19] Jeanne Arseneault, "A la Recherche du Costume Acadien," *Material History Bulletin* 4 (Fall, 1997): 46-56.
[20] See Jean-Claude Dupont, *Histoire Populaire de l'Acadie* (Montreal, QC: Leméac, 1979), 224.
[21] Sonya LaComb, "Habillés et déshabillés: Dress and Undress of the Louisiana Acadians/Cajuns, c. 1765-1830," in *L'Acadie au Féminin: un regard multidisciplinaire sur les Acadiennes et les Cadiennes,* Maurice Basque and Stéphanie Côté (Moncton, NB: Université de Moncton, 2000), 187.

unconnected to external changes in the market economy brought on by industrialization. However, in her study of nineteenth-century consumer culture in the Madawaska, the historian Béatrice Craig noticed that during the mid-nineteenth century Acadians were beginning to stray from traditional styles and adapting to popular North American fashions.[22] Craig's findings beg the question: were other areas similarly exchanging a distinct style for the dress of most European and North American cultures during the mid-nineteenth century? This thesis draws from travel journals that describe Acadian dress in various areas in the Canadian Maritimes and Louisiana over the course of the late eighteenth century and the nineteenth century to compare the styles of clothing worn in various settlements and during different time periods.

Public interest in the Acadian people rose among non-Acadians after the publication of *Evangeline* and led to a reimagining of dress during the nineteenth century. Longfellow's fictional account created stereotypes of the Acadians and their past. Ian McKay's and Robin Bates' notable work *In the Province of History* examines what McKay and Bates call the "Evangeline Phenomenon," whereby companies in Nova Scotia popularized the myths in Longfellow's poem to exploit the stereotypes surrounding Acadians by presenting them as old-fashioned peasants in order to draw tourist dollars to the province.[23] While McKay's and Bates' work reveals *Evangeline*'s part in altering the perception of the Acadians, there is a lot more to be said on the role Evangeline's costume played in a reconfigured understanding of the past.

Historians have thoroughly discussed the importance of *Evangeline* to Acadian nation building. Chantal Richard, Sacha Richard, Naomi Griffiths, and J. Yvon Thériault have written about the growth of Acadian nationalism during the late nineteenth century and the centrality of

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[22] Béatrice Craig, *Backwoods Consumers and Homespun Capitalists: The Rise of a Market Culture in Eastern Canada* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 186-189.
[23] Ian McKay and Robert Bates, *In the Province of History: the Making of the Public Past in Twentieth-Century Nova Scotia* (Montreal, QC: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010), 71-129.

Evangeline to national ideology. According to Griffiths, leaders used the themes in the poem to create a national founding myth that claimed that pre-Deportation Acadia was a paradise inhabited by devout Catholics whose faith allowed them to persevere and rebuild their communities after the British barbarically destroyed them in 1755. Similarly, Chantal Richard and Sacha Richard both argue that the perpetuation of the *Evangeline* myth at national gatherings led to widespread belief in the myth.[24]

However, the significance of the costume to nation building has not been sufficiently explored. Historian Caroline-Isabelle Caron has analyzed the large-scale use of the Evangeline costume in national and local events during the 1955 bicentenary. Caron's study is considered a microcosm in the extensive use of the costume during national celebrations.[25] The Canadian historian Ronald Rudin similarly noted that the Evangeline costume at the commemoration for the 175th anniversary of the Expulsion created a stronger sense of unity between scattered Acadian communities. However, Rudin's argument focuses on the politics of commemorating the past and the relevance of the Expulsion in commemorations rather than the significance of the use of the costume.[26]

There is an historiographical gap relating to the creation and adoption of the Evangeline costume as the traditional outfit. Caroline-Isabelle Caron has noted that "l'histoire du costume

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[24] J. Yvon Thériault, *L'Identité à l'épreuve de la modernité : écrits politiques sur l'Acadie et les francophonies canadiennes minoritaires* (Moncton, NB: Éditions d'Acadie, 1995), 219-233; Naomi Griffiths, "Longfellow's 'Evangeline': The Birth and Acceptance of a Legend," *Acadiensis: Journal of the History of the Atlantic Region/Revue d'histoire de la région Atlantique* 11, no. 2 (1982): 28-41; Chantal Richard, "Le récit de la Déportation comme mythe de création dans l'idéologie des Conventions nationales acadiennes (1881-1937)," *Acadiensis: Journal of the History of the Atlantic Region/Revue d'histoire de la région Atlantique* 36, no. 1(2006): 69-81; Sacha Richard, "Commémoration et idéologie nationale en Acadie. Les fêtes du bicentenaire de la Déportation acadienne," *Mens* 3, no. 1 (2001): 27-59, https://doi.org/10.7202/1024618ar.

[25] Caroline-Isabelle Caron, "Se souvenir de l'Acadie d'antan : représentations du passé historique dans le cadre de célébrations commémoratives locales en Nouvelle-Écosse au milieu du 20 e siècle," *Acadiensis: Journal of the History of the Atlantic Region/Revue d'histoire de la région Atlantique* 36, no. 2 (2007) : 55–71.

[26] See Ronald Rudin, *Remembering and Forgetting in Acadie: A Historian's Journey Through Public Memory* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 181-216.

d'Évangéline reste encore à faire, si son adoption comme 'costume traditionnel acadien' est un phénomène encore à explorer."[27] This thesis intends to fill this gap by discussing the origins and the process of the creation of the Evangeline costume to understand why a specific version of Evangeline's outfit became the national dress. According to Caron, the Evangeline costume became known as the Acadian outfit after the popular 1929 film *Evangeline* starring Delores Del Rio.[28] American historian Fitzhugh W. Brundage believes that the Evangeline costume was created as a publicity tactic in Louisiana in 1924 and used in commemorations as early as 1930.[29] While the particular version of the costume worn in Acadian communities by 1955 was first developed in Louisiana in 1924, there were several costumes that loosely corresponded to Evangeline which that non-Acadians wore before 1924. Since Longfellow described the Acadians in *Evangeline* as Norman peasants, these costumes were based on popular depictions of Norman peasant women. Norman peasant costumes were popular in North America and Europe during the middle of the nineteenth century.

Despite the limitations on travel and archival closures due to COVID-19, there is a wealth of digitalized travel journals and newspapers, such as *L'Evangéline, The Ottawa Citizen,* and *The Montreal Gazette*, from online databases. Canadiana, Internet Archive, HathiTrust, Google's digitalized newspaper archive, and newspapers.com allowed me to find relevant material using object character recognition technology (OCR).[30] Travel journals and newspapers,

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[27] Caroline-Isabelle Caron, "'Y a jamais eu de grand dérangement': représentations acadiennes de la Déportation au XXe siècle," *Perspective* 18 (2009), 85.
[28] Caron, "Se souvenir de l'Acadie d'antan," 69.
[29] Fitzhugh W. Brundage, "Le Réveil de la Louisiane: Memory and Acadian Identity, 1920-1960," In *Where These Memories Grow: History, Memory, and Southern Identity,* Fitzhugh W. Brundage (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 271-298.
[30] OCR technology allows the researcher to find relevant information on an online database through a keyword search. Although OCR allows for greater access to primary source material, OCR algorithms may lead to errors in the search. See Ian Milligan, "Illusionary Order: Online Databases, Optical Character Recognition, and Canadian History, 1997-2010," *The Canadian Historical Review,* 94 no. 4 (December 2013), 540-569.

supplemented by pamphlets, costume books, and editions of Longfellow's *Evangeline*, make up the bulk of the material in this study.[31] There is very little remaining material and documentary evidence of Acadian dress during the pre-Expulsion period as no textiles have survived. [32] Similarly, only a few artifacts remain from the nineteenth century which are preserved at the Nova Scotia Museum Collection and the Musée acadien at the University of Moncton. In the period following the Deportation, since a large segment of the Acadian population was not literate and those who were did not leave many descriptions of their dress, travel journals that included descriptions of garments, trade patterns, and observations of clothing production were similarly helpful to gain a better understanding of the Acadian attire during this period. Significant effort has been put into trying to understand the specific garments journal writers referred to when describing the Acadians to paint a picture of their dress as accurately as possible.[33]

This thesis is divided into four chapters. Chapter One examines the clothing from the establishment of the colony until the Expulsion began in 1755 to gain a better understanding of what the early settlers wore and how their dress contributed to the creation of a distinct Acadian identity. This section incorporates descriptions of trade and textiles primarily from travel journals to answer the question: did the first French settlers to Acadia develop new and unique styles that differentiated them from dress in France and other North American colonies? Chapter Two analyzes the distinct dress style that Acadians wore during the post-Expulsion period until the end of the nineteenth century when communities began to follow the fashions of other North

[31] The original language and spelling in quotations from primary material have been left untouched. However, punctuation has been changed to fit the sentence structure.
[32] Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 90.
[33] On illiteracy among the Acadians see Brenda Dunn, Sally Ross, and Birgitta Wallace, "Looking into Acadie: Three Illustrated Studies," Curatorial Report 87, (NS: Nova Scotia Museum Publications, November 1998), 64.

Americans in part due to increasing industrialization in North America. This chapter uses a variety of travel journals by American, English, and French tourists, and British officers to study the Acadians' dress to explain why Acadians continued to wear a unique style in the years following the Seven Years' War and how distinct dress contributed to the preservation of a group identity.

The following two chapters examine how the Acadian past was primarily reimagined with an invented costume following the publication of *Evangeline*. Chapter Three discusses how anxiety over the loss of traditional values due to industrialization prompted the Romantic Movement which led to a process of reimagining the past and the creation of an Evangeline costume in popular culture. This section examines illustrations of Evangeline's dress in editions of the poem, the popular "Normandy peasant" costume or "Evangeline" outfit at costumed events, and the use of the Evangeline figure dressed as a Norman peasant in advertising campaigns to promote tourism to Nova Scotia. Chapter Four studies the Acadian adoption of *Evangeline* through a specific costume at national and commemorative events during the first half of the twentieth century. Through newspaper sources, this section seeks to understand why an invented costume was chosen to represent the Acadian people and their past and what values the community hoped to promote by including the costume in nation-building events.

Chapter One: Acadian Dress Before the Expulsion

In 1699, during his travels to Acadia, the French writer Sieur de Dièreville recorded that the Acadians "[n]e se distinguant point par de Nouvelles modes."[34] Plain, homespun working attire is the stereotypical conception of early Acadian dress. However, trade records and travel journals suggest that the Acadians were well connected to Europe and to British and French settlements in North America. Through these connections, Acadians acquired colourful textiles and awareness of changing fashions. This chapter argues that during the pre-Deportation period, the combination of homespun clothing, the influences of the local Indigenous peoples, and trade with New England, France, and the French colonies in Canada and on Île Royale led to a process in which the Acadians' clothing changed from the rural working attire that the first settlers in the seventeenth century had arrived wearing to become a unique Acadian style. According to Naomi Griffiths, by the end of the seventeenth century, unique social, political, and economic customs were emerging in Acadia and were starting to differentiate the French settlers as a distinct Acadian community.[35] Since social groups use clothing as a tool to communicate the values of a particular community and to visibly differentiate the community from others, this evolution demonstrates the emergence of a distinct identity as the settlers went from being French to becoming Acadian.

Period Context

The French began to settle Acadia during the first decade of the seventeenth century. In 1603, Henri IV of France commissioned Sieur de Monts to go to New France to oversee the

[34] Sieur de Dièreville, and L. Urgèle Fontaine, *Voyage du Sieur de Dièreville en Acadie* (Québec: A. Côté., 1885), 49.
[35] Griffiths, *The Contexts of Acadian History*, 33.

settlement of Acadie and Canada and in 1604 Sieur de Monts and Samuel de Champlain chose Ste-Croix Island as the location of the settlement. In 1605, they moved the settlement to Port Royal, which became the capital of Acadia and an important location for trading furs.[36] The first French settlers to Acadia began to arrive a few decades later. They were, with few exceptions, Catholic and primarily from the Poitou-Touraine region in the centre west of France, particularly in the seigneurial lands of Charles de Menou in the Loudunais, a frontier area in the centre of the region. In 1644, de Menou recruited more than 200 soldiers, artisans, and contract workers, as well as twenty peasant families who were farm labourers in the Loudunais, to move to Acadia.

Over the next fifty years, French settlers continued to trickle into the colony, many of them similarly arriving from the Poitou-Touraine region. Although Acadia was eventually made up of settlers from at least nineteen regions of France, the first generations of Acadians shared the culture of southwestern France as subsequent settlers were integrated into the dominant society. By 1689 there were approximately 1,000 Euro-Americans in Acadia, and although settlers continued to arrive throughout the eighteenth century, by 1700 population increases in Acadia were mostly due to natural means by those already settled.[37] After the initial period of settlement in Port Royal, young couples spread out across present-day Nova Scotia to establish family farms in dispersed hamlets and towns. Based on the 1686 census, two thirds of the population still lived around Port Royal; however, over the next three years, Acadians began to spread out, particularly to the Minas area.[38] The settlers were able to support their existence in Acadia through agriculture, hunting, and fishing.[39]

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[36] Griffiths, *The Contexts of Acadian History,* 3-9, 25; Brun, *The Acadians Before 1755,* 1.
[37] Griffiths, *The Contexts of Acadian History*, 3, 33; Kennedy, *Something of a Peasant Paradise,* 9-12, 44.
[38] Griffiths, *The Contexts of Acadian History*, 16-17.
[39] Ibid, 26-27.

Acadia was on the border between New England and New France which made the region significant in the political agendas of both England and France. In 1654, during England's naval war with Holland, a fleet commanded by Major Robert Sedgwick of Boston captured Port Royal. Sedgwick managed to force Acadia's governor Charles de Saint-Étienne de la Tour to surrender his title to England. Consequently, for the next fifteen years London governed Acadia through Boston until it was returned to France in 1670.[40]

The colony's position between the French and the British struggle for territorial dominance in North America continued during the late seventeenth century and into the eighteenth century. In 1710, as part of the struggle for control of the imperial borderlands in North America during the War of the Spanish Succession, a fleet from New England attacked Port Royal and forced the French governor Daniel d'Auger de Subercase to surrender. British victory at Port Royal was ratified during the 1713 Treaty of Utrecht, which ended the war three years later and Acadia was ceded to the British while France retained control over Île Royale (Cape Breton Island) and Île Saint-Jean (Prince Edward Island). As part of the stipulations of the treaty, Acadians were allowed to move to the remaining French territories rather than continue living in the now British Acadia, which officially became Nova Scotia. However, while some Acadians did move to Île Royale and Île Saint-Jean, most of the settlers chose to remain in Nova Scotia as British subjects.

After the loss of Acadia, France attempted to strengthen its hold on the region by constructing the Fortress of Louisbourg as a French military post on nearby Île Royale in 1720.[41] Although the French presence continued to be felt in the region after the establishment of British control, the Acadian population had to navigate their new status as British subjects. In the

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[40] Griffiths, *The Contexts of Acadian History*, 7-9; Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme,* 58-59.
[41] Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme*, 151-154; Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 122.

aftermath of the Treaty of Utrecht, Port Royal had become Annapolis Royal, the new capital of British Nova Scotia. To administer the inhabitants, the British used a system whereby Acadian leaders chose delegates from each Acadian village to represent their communities to the British administration. The delegate system became an integral part of British-Acadian relations right away as the new governor of Nova Scotia, Colonel Richard Phillips, was given the task of securing the unconditional allegiance of the Acadians to the British Crown. However, when, in 1729, the delegates refused to swear an oath without an agreement that they would not be required to take up arms against France or their Indigenous allies, Phillips agreed to offer them an oral concession, stating that they would never have to take up arms against the French or the local Indigenous peoples as long as they agreed not to side with France in a conflict between England and France. The delegates accepted Phillips' conditional oath.[42]

French and English tensions once again spilled over into Acadia in 1744 during King George's War, known in Europe as the War of the Austrian Succession. During the war, the French led an unsuccessful uprising in Acadia to re-establish control over the colony. When the war ended in 1748, Louisbourg, which New England forces had captured in 1745, was returned to France in the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. Fearing that France would use its strength in the Maritimes to attack British colonies, in 1749 Britain began fortifying its forces in Nova Scotia to counterbalance Louisbourg and to secure its position in North America with the establishment of the town of Halifax in 1749. In addition, the administration at Annapolis Royal began to believe that the only way to defend Nova Scotia would be to secure the loyalty of the Acadians. However, since the Acadians had never pledged unconditional allegiance to the British government, the administration believed they were not faithful subjects. In 1749, when the

[42] Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme*, 151-178; Griffiths, *The Contexts of Acadian History*, 34-41.

British again asked the Acadians to swear unconditional allegiance to the Crown, the Acadian deputies sent a letter to Halifax agreeing to pledge conditional allegiance if they could continue to freely practice their religion and never have to bear arms against France.[43]

During the 1750s, the belief that hostilities would soon break out with France over colonies in North America led the British government to become increasingly concerned about British control in Nova Scotia. By 1755 the lieutenant-governor of Nova Scotia, Charles Lawrence, believed that the province could not be secured while the Acadians lived there because they refused to take an unqualified oath of loyalty and declared that they were neutral between the French and the British governments. The Acadians' declaration of neutrality led the British government in Halifax to believe that the Acadians posed a security threat to British power. To deal with the security risk, Lawrence wanted the Acadians to be removed from the region and sent to other British North American colonies to be assimilated with other British populations. Consequently, from 1755 to 1764, during the Seven Years' War between England and France, the Acadians not only lost their right to own land in Nova Scotia, but they were also officially expelled from the region as the British government attempted to remove all Acadians through deportation.[44]

Acadian Dress

The settlers brought French culture and customs to Acadia with them. In France, a person's dress was determined by whether they lived in an urban or a rural area, their occupation, and their rank, as French men and women were expected to dress according to their social class. A wealthy man's outfit was tailored to fit with matching colours, as the well-fitting garments

[43] Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme*, 218-253; Griffiths, *The Contexts of Acadian History*, 75-79.
[44] Griffiths, *The Contexts of Acadian History*, 83-105.

demonstrated that a person was refined, while the baggier garments necessary for greater mobility for outdoor labour that the rural and working classes wore were associated with laziness and looser morals. Although there was consistency in the silhouette between classes, dress varied between regions. The first French settlers to Acadia transported French dress and French beliefs surrounding dress etiquette with them as they recreated the styles that they were used to making in France in Acadia.[45] Due to the fact that most of the initial settlers had been rural workers in France, it can be surmised that they arrived in Acadia dressed in rural working garb.

Men's Dress

A seventeenth-century labouring man in France wore a coat and a waistcoat or sometimes just a shirt and a jacket for working, with fitted knee-length breeches or loose ankle-length trousers.[46] The only two textual references to men's dress suggest that Acadians continued to wear a similar outfit throughout the period of settlement. For instance, an inventory for the Acadian Pierre Boisseau from 1755 at Louisbourg listed coats, waistcoats, and breeches. Similarly, writing about his early life in the years following the Deportation, Moses de la Dernier noted that men in Acadia wore coats and leg bandages, which were an accessory worn over trousers to protect the lower leg.[47] The coats listed in Boisseau's inventory may have been similar to the loose hip-length jackets that farmers and labourers in the British colonies wore during the eighteenth century since this style offered greater mobility than the long and fitted

[45] Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 422, 276; Robert Duplessis, *The Material Atlantic: Clothing, Commerce, and Colonization in the Atlantic World, 1650-1800* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 28-31.
[46] Madeleine Delpierre, *Dress in France in the Eighteenth Century,* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 1997), 114-115.

[47] Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 447-450.

jackets called "justaucorps" used by wealthy Frenchmen.[48] Another possible style of coat by the 1740s could have been the "capot à la canadienne" which colonists in Canada had adopted from French sailors. This style of coat was often made of blue or brown serge and consisted of a large cape with a hood that was tightened at the waist by a belt.[49] Acadians could have learned of this style from the colonists in Canada as it would have been useful during the winter.

Acadian men may have similarly adopted some elements of the dress of the local Indigenous peoples. The region was peopled by several Indigenous nations belonging to the Algonquian linguistic and cultural family.[50] For the most part, Acadians lived in separate communities from their Indigenous neighbours; however, settlers and Indigenous peoples came into contact through the local fur trade and some intermarriages occurred between French men and women from the Maliseet and Mi'kmaq nations. Thomas Peace believes that only a few French families continued to foster relationships with their Indigenous neighbours after the first few decades of settlement; however this relatively limited contact and the continuation of trade caused Acadians to adopt elements of Indigenous dress.[51] For example, in 1680 the French Intendant De Meulles noted that the inhabitants of the Acadian settlement of Beaubassin wore "de Sousliers sauvages qu'ils font eux mesme."[52] In addition, De Meulles observed Acadians

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[48] Kathleen A. Staples and Madelyn Shaw, *Clothing through American history: the British colonial era,* (Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2013), 329; Pat Tomczyszyn, "Le Costume Traditionnel: A Study of Clothing and Textiles in the Town of Québec, 1635-1760," (M.A., University of Manitoba, 1999), 29, accessed October 22, 2020, 46, ProQuest (MQ51811).

[49] Francis Back, "S'habiller à la Canadienne," *Cap-aux-Diamants,* no.24 (1991): 40.

[50] Stephen E. Patterson, "Indian-White Relations in Nova Scotia, 1749-61: A Study in Political Interaction," *Acadiensis: Journal of the History of the Atlantic Region/Revue d'histoire de la région Atlantique* 23, no. 1 (1993): 29.

[51] Thomas Peace, "A Reluctant Engagement: Alliances and Social Networks in Early-18th-Century Kespukwitk and Port Royal," *Acadiensis: Journal of the History of the Atlantic Region/Revue d'histoire de la région Atlantique* 49, no.1 (2020): 37-38; Kennedy, *Something of a Peasant Paradise,* 68; Griffiths, *The Contexts of Acadian History*, 23-25, 32.

[52] Jacques de Meulles, "Mémoire Concernant Beaubassin Ou Chignectou et La Baie-Verte" (1686), series C11D. Correspondance générale; Acadie. Vol. 2, f. 48-51v, Library and Archives Canada.

trading with the English by using "des pelteries qu'ils ont eu des sauvages."[53] Although De Meulles describes the settlers trading the animal pelts, some of the skins and furs that the Acadians traded could have been used to line the insides of garments such as breeches to make warm and durable attire for outdoor labour.[54]

Women's Dress

In France, rural working women wore a petticoat with a fitted jacket called a casaquin with an apron.[55] This appears to have been the outfit the first settlers arrived wearing and one that they continued to don throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. For example, outsiders described women in isolated post-Expulsion settlements wearing this style in the years following the Expulsion which suggests that it originated before the diaspora.[56] Further, the combination of a jacket and petticoat was the common dress of rural and working women in other North American settlements including Canada, Louisiana, and New England which suggests that Acadians dressed in a fairly typical manner.[57] In 1749, while visiting Canada, the Swedish botanist Pehr Kalm described seeing this style. According to Kalm, "all the women in the country, without exception, wear caps of some kind or other. Their jackets are short, and so are their petticoats…[w]hen they go out of doors they wear long cloaks, which cover all their other clothes, and are either grey, brown, or blue."[58]

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[53] Ibid.
[54] Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 310-311.
[55] Delpierre, *Dress in France in the Eighteenth Century,* 114-115; Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 362.
[56] Provincial Museum of Nova Scotia, "Report on the Provincial Museum and Science Library for the Fiscal Year 1934-35," (Halifax, NS: Provincial Secretary King's Printer, 1936), 27- 29, Internet Archive; Lacomb, "Habillés et déshabillés," 194.
[57] Sophie White, *Wild Frenchmen and Frenchified Indians: Material Culture and Race in Colonial Louisiana* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 65; Staples and Shaw, "Clothing through American history," 257.
[58] Pehr Kalm, *Travels into North America: containing its natural history, and a circumstantial account of its plantations and agriculture in general, with the civil, ecclesiastical and commercial state of the country, the*

Women likely wore fabric corsets underneath the jacket or mantelet. An Acadian woman living in Louisbourg, Anne Levron, owned nine gilets, which were quilted, unboned bodices often used as an alternative to the more constricted style of whalebone that wealthy women in France wore to achieve the rigid look of the nobility.[59] Many women in French and English colonies, such as Louisiana and New England, similarly wore quilted corsets instead. The use of gilets demonstrates that Acadians were not following the European standards that demanded a rigid bodice to appear morally upright. In 1731, the Boston merchant Robert Hale noticed the more relaxed appearance of women's dress as he commented that, even though "[t]he [w]omen's [c]loaths are good eno,'" they "look as if they were pitched on with pitchforks."[60]

The long cloaks that Kalm observed may have similarly been used in Acadia as full-length outer garments, as they would have been necessary during the cold winter months. Another possible outer garment during the eighteenth century could have been mantelets, which were sleeveless coats. Although it is unknown whether women in Acadian settlements wore mantelets, they appear in inventories of the handful of Acadian women living in Louisbourg.[61] Inventories from colonists in rural areas of Quebec similarly include references to mantelets which points to the possibility that this garment may have also been popular in Acadia due to trade with Canada.[62] Otherwise, mantelets were simple to make so women could have become aware of this style through trade and copied it using locally produced or imported fabrics.[63]

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manners of the inhabitants, and Several Curious and Important Remarks on Various Subjects. Translated by Johann Reinhold Forster (Vol. II. London: Printed by T. Lowndes, 1772), 244, Internet Archive.

[59] White, *Wild Frenchmen and Frenchified Indians*, 63; Monique La Grenade, "Civil Costume at Louisbourg: 1713-1758 Women's Costume," Fortress of Louisbourg Report, Parcs Canada and Fortress Louisbourg, 1971; Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 431-432, 422.

[60] Robert Hale, "Journal of a Voyage to Nova Scotia Made in 1731: By Robert Hale of Beverly," *The Essex Institute Historical Collections* XLII (July 1906): 225, HathiTrust.

[61] Ibid, 454-455.

[62] Jacqueline Beaudoin-Ross, "'A La Canadienne' Once More: Some Insights into Quebec Rural Female Dress," *Dress* 7, no. 1(1981): 74, http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1179/036121181803657936.

[63] White, *Wild Frenchmen and Frenchified Indians,* 63.

Women wore petticoats and aprons with their jackets and mantelets. Petticoats were a necessary garment and could have been either imported to Acadian settlements or homespun. Homespun petticoats appear to have been common enough to be exported and trade records reveal that in 1743 merchants exported homespun petticoats from the Minas settlements and Beaubassin, some of which were traded in Louisbourg.[64] The homespun petticoats were probably similar to the woollen petticoats that working women in New England wore. However, the upper-class Acadian women at Louisbourg preferred cotton petticoats, which indicates that through trade, Acadians may have acquired imported cotton petticoats from Louisbourg to add to their wardrobes.[65]

The first settlers likely wore cloth caps as that was the typical headdress of women in France.[66] However, a dispute over women's hairstyles in the Beaubassin settlement in 1690 suggests that women sometimes wore decorated headgear instead of cloth caps. When a group of women complained that the priest Abbé Claude Trouvé had not granted them absolution after confession because the lace and ribbon from their headgear covered their faces, the priest insisted that in the future, the women wear plain caps to church. His discomfort over women wearing decorated styles reveals the tensions between women's dress and Christian modesty. Trouvé was part of the Catholic order of Saint Sulpice. Sulpicians, who had an important role in the Acadian community, were known to be strict, especially when it came to women's sexuality and roles. Perhaps he felt that the decorations on the women's headgear caused them to appear immodest.[67] Although some women may have been dissuaded from wearing embellished styles

[64] Brun, *The Acadians Before 1755,* 26, 146.
[65] Staples and Shaw, "Clothing through American history," 260-264; Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 322, 439; Delpierre, *Dress in France in the Eighteenth Century*, 10-14.
[66] Delpierre, *Dress in France in the Eighteenth Century,* 115.
[67] Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 385-386.

after this incident, Trouvé's comment suggests that at least some women wore headdresses other than caps, potentially decorated bonnets, for formal occasions such as church.

On the other hand, in 1756 a letter from a French official in Louisbourg, Monsieur de la Varenne, recorded a different type of headdress in Louisbourg. He noted that "[t]he women are covered with a cloak, and all their head dress is generally a handkerchief, which would serve for a veil too, in the manner they tied it on, if it descended low enough."[68] The cloak that de la Varenne described may have been a mantilla. Mantillas, which were worn in France during the eighteenth century, were essentially scarves that covered the head. In his study of clothing in the town of Quebec from 1635 to 1760, Pat Tomczyszyn found only one entry for a mantilla. Similarly, Monique La Grenade only found one reference to a mantilla at Louisbourg.[69] Although mantillas do not appear to have been popular in other French colonial settlements, Acadians may have worn them more frequently because, years later, nineteenth-century observers similarly described Acadian women wearing cloak-like veils over their hair which suggests that this style was already popular during the eighteenth century.[70]

Acadians wore a variety of styles of footwear. The first French settlers probably arrived in the colony wearing wooden clogs called "sabots" which were common among the French rural working class.[71] Observations from outsiders during the eighteenth century suggest that Acadians wore this style throughout the colony's history. For instance, in 1731 Robert Hale recounted an instance where "2 Frenchmen came on Board us, one of whom had wooden Shoes

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[68] Monsieur de la Varenne and Ken Donovan, "A Letter from Louisbourg, 1756 (with an Introduction by Ken Donovan)," Translation by Ken Donovan, *Acadiensis: Journal of the History of the Atlantic Region/Revue d'histoire de la région Atlantique* 10, no. 1 (Septermber 9, 1980), 124.
[69] Tomczyszyn, "Le Costume Traditionnel," 254-255; La Grenade, "Civil Costume at Louisbourg: 1713-1758 Women's Costume."
[70] Rameau de Saint-Père, Edme, and Ronnie-Gilles LeBlanc, *Le voyage de Rameau de Saint-Père en Acadie: 1860* (Québec: QC: Les Éditions du Septentrion, 2018), 121; P.-M Dagnaud, *Les Français du sud-ouest de la nouvelle Écosse* (Besançon: Librairie centrale, veuve C. Marion, 1905), 21.
[71] Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 362.

on."[72] In addition, in 1755 Abijah Willard, an officer from New England, noted that in "2 or 3 veleges…I Saw a grate many french women and gorls…their feet Loock very Strange with wooden Shoos which they all wore."[73]

Archaeological studies indicate that Acadians similarly wore leather shoes with buckles. For instance, Archaeological digs have discovered a European-style leather shoe at the Acadian settlement of Grand Pré and shoe buckles at Acadian sites in Nova Scotia and in Prince Edward Island.[74] Leather shoes could have entered Acadia through trade with New England or Louisbourg after its completion in 1720 as leather shoes were worn in both areas.[75] Indeed, in 1695, the Acadian trader Charles LaTour imported "[s]ix pair shoes" from Massachusetts to Cape Sable.[76]

Acadians also adopted styles of shoes worn by the Mi'kmaq. De Meulles noted that the inhabitants of Beaubassin wore moccasins which they made themselves, as he observed them wearing "de Sousliers sauvages qu'ils font eux mesme."[77] Similarly, in 1699 the travel writer Sieur de Dièreville observed seal-skin shoes at Port Royal, which he said both the Indigenous people and the Acadians wore.[78] A similar trend occurred in the St. Lawrence Valley where French settlers wore moccasins and fur boots, both of which were used by the local Indigenous peoples.[79]

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[72] Hale, "Journal of a Voyage to Nova Scotia Made in 1731," 225.
[73] Abijah Willard and John Clarence Webster, *Journal of Abijah Willard of Lancaster, Mass.: an officer in the expedition which captured Fort Beauséjour in 1755* (New Brunswick Historical Society, 1930), 28, Internet Archive.
[74] Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 364-377.
[75] Monique La Grenade, "Civil Costume at Louisbourg: 1713-1758 Men's Costume," Fortress of Louisbourg Report, Parcs Canada and Fortress Louisbourg, March 1972; Staples and Shaw, "Clothing through American history," 242.
[76] "Certificate by William Welsteed," January 12, 1696/7, Suffolk County Court, Suffolk Court Files XXXVIII, 3007, 9th paper, Appendix II to Daigle, "Nos Amis Les Ennemis,'"218.
[77] de Meulles, "Mémoire Concernant Beaubassin Ou Chignectou et La Baie-Verte."
[78] Sieur de Dièreville, and Fontaine, *Voyage du Sieur de Dièreville en Acadie,* 49.
[79] Francis Back, "S'habiller à la Canadienne," 38.

Acadians wore both homespun and imported stockings. Homespun stockings were not in short supply because, during the 1740s, Acadians exported locally made stockings from Beaubassin. For example, in 1743, the cargo of Acadian merchant Zacharie Richard included between 30 and 40 pairs of woollen socks.[80] However, ready-made imported stockings were similarly brought to Acadia from New England. In 1695 the Acadian trader, Charles LaTour imported "two dozen halfe stockings" to Cape Sable.[81] In addition, archaeologists have discovered bale seals that would have been used for imported silk stockings at the Beaubassin settlement.[82] Acadians may have worn their stockings in an unusual style, though, as Robert Hale observed Acadians whose, "[s]tockings are down about their heels," unlike typical knee-length stockings.[83] Although well-fitted and gartered stockings were a sign of gentility, European farmers sometimes wore their stockings this way for greater mobility while working.[84]

Local Influences

Acadians used a variety of locally produced textiles. The main fibres of the pre-industrial west were linen, hemp, wool, cotton, and silk. The wealthy more commonly used silk while linen, hemp, and wool were the primary fabrics of the rural working class.[85] Several observers recorded that the Acadians made homespun garments from wool, hemp, and linen. Woollen textiles were necessary for the cold climate and could be made from sheep once sheep were introduced into the colony in 1664, and hemp and flax to make linen could be cultivated in

[80] Doda, "The Acadian of our Fancy," 146.
[81] "Certificate by William Welsteed," Appendix II to Daigle, "Nos Amis Les Ennemis,'"218.
[82] Doda, "The Acadian of our Fancy," 459-460.
[83] Hale, "Journal of a Voyage to Nova Scotia Made in 1731," 234.
[84] Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 461.
[85] Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 269; Delpierre, *Dress in France in the Eighteenth Century,* 50, 114.

Acadia.[86] Locally produced linen was abundant by the late 1680s as Mathieu De Goutin, a French official in the colony, noted that surpluses were sent to Boston to be traded.[87] Similarly, on his trip to Acadia in 1699, Sieur de Dièreville recorded that "de leur lin ils se font encore de la toile" and noted that the Acadians similarly used wool to make clothing, caps, and stockings.[88] Similarly, the governor of Acadia, Joseph Robineau de Villebon, remarked that in the Minas Basin settlements "the women they are always busy, and most of them keep their husbands and children in serviceable linen materials and stockings which they make skillfully from the hemp they have grown and the wool produced by their sheep."[89] Archaeological digs have similarly confirmed the cultivation of hemp from the discovery of hemp seeds in an Acadian well on Prince Edward Island. Although considered to be a lower-end fabric due to its coarseness, Acadians could use hemp to make durable clothing that would have been necessary for farmers working outdoors.[90]

The settlers wore leather and furs along with their homespun garments. For example, in the 1680s, the Intendant of New France, Jacques De Meulles, noted that the settlers were tanning their own leather.[91] To obtain furs, Acadians traded with their Indigenous neighbours such as the "pelteries qu'ils one eu des sauvages"[92] that de Meulles observed settlers exchanging with the English. In addition, while describing his experience as an officer during the Expulsion, years later, Brook Watson remembered Acadians "carding, spinning and weaving wool, flax and hemp,

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[86] Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 137.
[87] Ibid, 292.
[88] Sieur de Dièreville, and Fontaine, *Voyage du Sieur de Dièreville en Acadie,* 49.
[89] Joseph Robineau Villebon and Webster, John Clarence, *Acadia at the End of the Seventeenth Century; Letters, Journals and Memoirs of Joseph Robineau de Villebon, Commandant in Acadia, 1690-1700, and Other Contemporary Documents*, Monographic Series No. 1. Saint John, NB.: The New Brunswick Museum, 1934, quoted in Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'"135-136.
[90] Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 294.
[91] Ibid, 310-311.
[92] de Meulles, "Mémoire Concernant Beaubassin Ou Chignectou et La Baie-Verte."

of which this country furnished abundance; these with furs from bears, beaver, foxes, otter, and martin, gave them not only comfortable, but in many instances, handsome clothing."[93] By the 1740s, locally produced textiles seem to have made up a significant part of the settlers' wardrobes since homespun clothing was common enough to be exported, such as the homespun skirts that were traded in Louisbourg in 1743.

Acadians may have relied on the use of homespun garments more than the settlers in other French colonies in North America. In 1721 the French Crown passed an edict that forbade the cultivation of hemp and flax in its colonies to favour industries in France. Although this did not entirely stop colonists from producing homespun clothing, large varieties of imported textiles and ready-made garments had to be transported to colonies such as Louisiana and Canada because the colonists were forbidden from producing their own textiles.[94] However, since Acadia was under British control after 1713, it was subject to the policies of the English colonies rather than the French colonies, which were not prohibited from local textile production.

Local materials were used to colour garments. For example, de la Varenne stated that Acadian men in Louisbourg were "commonly drest in a sort of coarse black stuff made in the country."[95] According to Brook Watson, Acadians used black and green dye as he recorded that "they had no dye but black and green."[96] However, Acadians may have similarly learned to make additional dye colours from the Mi'kmaq. During his trip to Canada in the summer of 1749, the Swedish botanist Pehr Kalm wrote that the French settlers in Canada had learned from some of the local Indigenous people that the leaves and stalks from a plant called "tissavoyanne

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[93] Hon. Brook Watson to the Reverend Andrew Brown, 1 July 1791, cited in James Hannay, "The Acadian French," in *Collections of the Nova Scotia Historical Society*, vol. 1, 1881, 133, HathiTrust.
[94] White, *Wild Frenchmen and Frenchified Indians*, 61.
[95] De la Varenne and Ken Donovan, "A Letter from Louisbourg," 124.
[96] Hon. Brook Watson to the Reverend Andrew Brown, 133.

jaune" could be used to dye wool and other things yellow.[97] Through contact with the Mi'kmaq, settlers in Acadia may have similarly learned which local resources they could use to make clothing dyes.[98]

Trade

The settlements were not entirely self-sufficient, though, as they relied on imports to acquire the necessary textiles because they were unable to produce enough of their own cloth to supply their needs. For example, wool was vital for the cold climate; however, settlers could not produce their own woollen textiles until sheep were introduced to the colonies in 1664. By the eighteenth century, trade for woollens was still necessary to supplement locally produced woollens as, per the 1707 census, none of the settlements were able to produce enough wool to supply their needs.[99]

The British takeover of Acadia in 1654 offered a solution to the shortages because it gave Acadians easy access to imported goods to supplement their locally produced textiles through trade with Boston. Acadians traded with Massachusetts to obtain goods that they could not make themselves in exchange for agricultural surpluses. Boston merchants set up trade routes with the larger communities and warehouses at Port Royal. Consequently, by the time Acadia was returned to France in 1670, Acadians had set up well-established trade with merchants from Massachusetts. In 1671 Jean Talon, the Intendant of New France, asked the French government to try to change Acadian trade networks to favour New France instead of New England. Talon suggested sending the Acadians cloth and looms from France or Quebec to fulfill their clothing

[97] Kalm, *Travels into North America,* 306.
[98] Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 276.
[99] Ibid, 137-140.

needs. Although the French government made the trade illegal to keep Boston's merchants and fishermen out of Acadia to encourage colonists to buy French products, Acadians continued to obtain products from New England after 1671. The short distance between Acadia and Boston led merchants to prefer to trade with New England rather than with France or other French colonies as it took about six weeks for traders to get from Quebec to the settlement of Beaubassin on the Isthmus of Chignecto and another two weeks from Beaubassin to Port Royal.[100]

The trade between Acadia and Massachusetts influenced the development of dress in Acadia as clothing items were traded between the two regions. According to De Meulles, although "la plupart des femmes font elles mesmes des Etamines dont elles s'habillent et leurs maris aussy, [as] [e]lles font presque toutes des bas pour leur famille et se passent den achepter." However, to obtain the items that they could not make themselves "[i]l vient tous les ans dans ce leiu une barque angloise au mois d'avril qui leur aporte de leurs petites necessitees qu'ils acheptent."[101] However, English ships imported more than just "petites necessitees." Trade supplied Acadians with a variety of clothing-related items. For example, the logbooks of the seventeenth-century merchant Henri Brunet, who conducted trade with Plaisance and Boston, show that Holland cloth, which was fine European linen, was traded regularly in Acadia, such as the "piesse de toile Blanches de 22 aune, deux ollonne," that he imported in 1673.[102] In addition, an invoice from 1691 between the Acadian merchant Abraham Boudrot and his Boston supplier André Taneuil states that Boudrot had been commissioned to sell cloth, accessories, and

[100] Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 223, 113, 148-149; Kennedy, *Something of a Peasant Paradise?,* 102.
[101] de Meulles, "Mémoire Concernant Beaubassin Ou Chignectou et La Baie-Verte."
[102] Henri Brunet, "Voyages of Henri Brunet" (1673), Collection Clairambault, vol. 864. BAC-LAC Microfilm reel C-4594, MG 7 IA5, Bibliothèque nationale de France / Library and Archives Canada, quoted in Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 290.

garments in Port Royal, including seven and a half yards of "drap rouge," "toile bleuie," 155.5 yards of "dentelle de sois," nine and a half yards of "riban bleu," and twelve pairs of "bas pour homme."[103] Further, in 1695, Charles Latour brought a variety of clothing-related items from Massachusetts to Cape Sable to trade in Acadia. His invoice included fabrics such as "[t]wo pieces of white cotton," and "[r]ed searge," as well as clothing accessories such as "six dozen pewter buttons" and garments, as his inventory included "two dozen halfe stockings," and "[s]ix pair shoes."[104] Although it is unclear whether all of the cargo that Brunet, Boudrot, and LaTour brought to the colony was traded with Acadian settlers, the records suggest that a wide range of textiles entered Acadia through trade with Massachusetts.

Through the trade, Acadians had access to colourful and printed textiles such as the red and blue cloth imported by Boudrot. Moreover, common patterns used on clothing sold in North American markets included squares, checks, florals, and stripes.[105] These patterns were also popular in the American colonies. For example, merchant inventories often described the cottons brought to Boston as "flowered," "painted," and "speckled," and silks as "flowered" and "striped."[106] Since these patterns were frequently imported to Boston, they were likely also among imports to Acadia. Indeed, the merchant Boudrot imported 26.5 yards of gingham, which was a lighter cotton that usually came in a striped pattern, to Minas in 1693.[107]

The British takeover of Nova Scotia in 1713 led Acadians to increase their reliance on trade networks with New England. By the 1720s, five to six English ships entered the Bay of

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[103] Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 149; "Invoice of Merchandise from Abraham Boudrot to André Taneuil," April 26, 1691, XXXVII 93, Massachusetts Archives, Appendix I to Daigle, "Nos Amis Les Ennemis,'" 217.
[104] "Certificate by William Welsteed," Appendix II to Daigle, "Nos Amis Les Ennemis,'"218.
[105] Robert S. DuPlessis, "Cottons Consumption in the Seventeenth-and Eighteenth-Century North Atlantic," in *The Spinning World: A Global History of Cotton Textiles, 1200-1850,* Giorgio Riello and Prasannan Parthasarathi (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 245.
[106] Linda Baumgarten Berlekamp, "The Textile Trade in Boston: 1650-1700," (M.A., University of Delaware (Winterthur Program), 1976), 36-37, accessed October 15, 2020, ProQuest (1309002).
[107] Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 304-305.

Fundy two to three times a year to trade with Acadians. Although the British government tried to steer all the trade through Annapolis Royal, merchants from New England continued to travel to Acadian settlements to trade with settlers directly. Much of this trade included textiles. During the eighteenth century, the Atlantic textile trade was booming with cloth as the second most consumed product among Europeans, after food. Indeed, through trade with Boston, merchants brought clothing-related products from the West Indies, New England, and Europe.[108] For instance, in 1791, Brook Watson stated that during his time in Acadia "in order to obtain scarlet-of which they were remarkably fond-they procured the English scarlet duffel which they cut, teized, carded, spun, and wove in stripes to decorate the women's garments."[109] In addition, during the eighteenth century, colonists in New England imported silk from India, which, like the English duffel observed by Watson, could have ended up in Acadian hands through trade.[110]

Similarly, despite British directives, the Acadians continued to trade with France after 1713. For instance, Watson described how trade with both the English and the French enabled the Acadians to not only obtain their material needs, but live quite comfortably. According to Watson, since the Acadians acquired "other necessities and conveniences from the English and French who carried on a trade of barter with them; few houses were to be found that had not a hogshead of French wine on tap."[111] One of the inroads for French products into Acadian homes after 1720 was through the French Fortress of Louisbourg on Île Royale. Louisbourg was an urban and commercial centre that was culturally connected to France as the population was

[108] Brun, *The Acadians Before 1755,* 25; Kennedy, *Something of a Peasant Paradise?,* 103; Robert S. DuPlessis, "Defining A French Atlantic Empire: Some Material Culture Evidence," *Fleuves, Rivières Et Colonies: La France Et Ses Empires (Xviie-Xxe Siècle)* 33 (2007): 7.
[109] Hon. Brook Watson to the Reverend Andrew Brown, 133.
[110] Staples and Shaw, "Clothing through American history," 133.
[111] Hon. Brook Watson to the Reverend Andrew Brown, 133.

primarily made up of French soldiers and officials.[112] The close relations with France through trade allowed Louisbourg's residents to keep up with changing Parisian dress despite the delay in obtaining new garments from overseas.[113] Acadians outside of Louisbourg acquired French textiles through trade. For example, Acadian merchants such as Joseph LeBlanc, who ran a lucrative livestock trade with Île Royale during the 1730s, regularly travelled between Acadian settlements and the fortress to exchange goods. In addition, in 1743 merchants sold excess goods from the Minas Basin settlements, such as rabbit pelts, homespun skirts, and woollen socks, in Louisbourg and between 1749 and 1758, about 40 Acadian vessels traded with Louisbourg every year.[114]

Further, connections between Acadian settlements and Louisbourg were facilitated by the handful of Acadians who lived in the fortress. Acadians in Louisbourg were mostly wives of French officers. One Acadian woman, Marie Josephe LeBorgne de Belleisle, owned a store in Louisbourg where she sold French textiles to other colonists.[115] Le Borgne had several relatives who were of Acadian descent, including one merchant, and based on a property evaluation from 1750, Le Borgne's list of debtors included Acadians. Through trade connections such as those with LeBorgne, Acadians had access to textiles in expensive fabrics such as silk and cotton, both of which were sold at Louisbourg in the 1750s.[116] In addition, through the relationship with LeBorgne, Acadians acquired the awareness of changing French fashions which were highly sought after in Europe and in North American colonies during the eighteenth century.[117]

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[112] Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 122.
[113] Razzolini, "Costume Research and Reproduction at Louisbourg," 60.
[114] Brun, *The Acadians Before 1755,* 26, 90; Kennedy, *Something of a Peasant Paradise?,* 103.
[115] Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 494, 125.
[116] Ibid, 152-153, 304-309.
[117] Pat Tomczyszyn, "Le Costume Traditionnel," 29.

Kalm noted that in Canada, settlers imported clothing from France to go along with locally produced clothing as "[e]very countryman commonly keeps a few sheep, which supply him with as much wool as he wants to clothe himself with [while] the better sort of clothes are brought from France."[118] A similar phenomenon occurred in Acadia. However, while Acadians did purchase some ready-made garments, such as stockings, shoes, and potentially other items including petticoats or mantelets, Acadians appear to have mainly imported textiles to make their own garments. In other words, the trade records indicate that instead of purchasing "the better sort of clothes," Acadians purchased "the better sort" of textiles with which to make their clothes.

However, the degree to which Acadians wore imported textiles compared to locally produced textiles varied between the settlements. Hilary Doda has argued that the dress of Acadians who lived in areas that were in close proximity to colonial authority was more heavily influenced by contemporary European styles, with people wearing more expensive imported textiles, while those living further away from centres of imperial power wore more locally produced garments.[119] For example, Acadians in the Melanson settlement, which was close to the colonial administration at Annapolis Royal, copied the styles of the colonial elite, while in the more isolated farming community of Belleisle, settlers relied more on durable homespun textiles.[120] Historian Gregory Kennedy similarly found that in the 1707 census of Acadia, there were significant differences in wealth among settlers in Port Royal, Minas, and Beaubassin. Kennedy's findings suggest that Acadia was a stratified society where some of the settlers had

[118] Kalm, *Travels into North America,* 328.
[119] Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 6.
[120] Geoffrey Gilbert Plank, *An unsettled conquest: the British campaign against the peoples of Acadia* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 23; Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 490-492.

the means to acquire more imported textiles than their neighbours.[121] However, similarities would have occurred between the settlements through family connections and trade. Indeed, Doda believes that similarities between scissors excavated from several different settlements indicate that there was at least some communication and trade between the settlements.[122]

Despite Sieur de Dièreville's comment that the Acadians "[n]e se distinguant point par de Nouvelles modes," the range of dress influences through trade with New England, Louisbourg, and with the local Indigenous peoples led to a wider range of fabrics, colours, and garments in the settlers' outfits, altering their appearance.[123] Homespun garments made of wool, linen, and hemp, sometimes lined with skins or furs, were necessary for day-to-day use and outdoor labour. However, to supplement their locally produced textiles, Acadians purchased imported fabric such as linen, wool, and cotton in a variety of colours and patterns, including the "toile bleuie" and "drap rouge" imported from Boston in 1691 and the English scarlet duffel that Watson observed.[124] Settlers who lived near urban areas or trade centres likely wore some imported garments such as shoes and stockings, but Acadians in distant settlements were still connected to larger communities through trade and kinship ties.[125] Consequently, those in more remote settlements also had some imported garments or at least accessories like ribbons to wear daily or for special occasions such as church.

The mix of influences led to a distinct Acadian look. Despite trade with New England and the potential use of some of the same clothing styles, the Acadians' method of dress was peculiar enough to be noteworthy to Robert Hale, who remarked that "[t]he [w]omen here differ as much

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[121] Kennedy, *Something of a Peasant Paradise?,* 57, 107.
[122] Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 207.
[123] Sieur de Dièreville, and Fontaine, *Voyage du Sieur de Dièreville en Acadie,* 49.
[124] Hon. Brook Watson to the Reverend Andrew Brown, 133.
[125] Griffiths, *The Contexts of Acadian History*, 67-68.

in y r Cloathing…from those in New Engld."[126] In addition, Acadians developed a distinct pattern of alternating stripes to decorate their garments. Weaving expert and curator Dorothy K. Burnham, who catalogued nineteenth-century textiles in Canada, studied weaving in isolated post-Deportation Acadian communities in both Louisiana and the Canadian Maritimes. According to Burnham, despite the lack of contact between those regions, bed coverings from both areas were done in the same unusual pattern of a dark and a light weft spun together to create twisted stripes, which she called a "barberpole line." The common use of this pattern in communities disconnected from each other suggests that this pattern originated in pre-Expulsion Acadia. Further, according to Hilary Doda, no samples of French wool from the early eighteenth century demonstrate the use of the barberpole line even though Europeans and Euro-American frequently wore stripes.[127] Consequently, the striped garments that Watson observed may have been patterned in this unique weaving style.

The Acadians' clothing was also apparently recognizable as a particularly Acadian style even outside of the colony as between 1765 to 1766, the French government gave looms to a group of Acadians who had moved to Belle-Ile-en-Mer in France to create "tissue acadien," perhaps a reference to the unique barberpole weave. The fact that the garments they were asked to sew were specifically called "acadien," indicates that Acadian weaving patterns were unique enough to set them apart from other French weaves.[128] Consequently, along with a unique clothing style, a distinct Acadian identity emerged.

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[126] Hale, "Journal of a Voyage to Nova Scotia Made in 1731," 233-234.

[127] Dorothy K Burnham, *The Comfortable Arts: Traditional Spinning and Weaving in Canada* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1981), 54; Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 274. See figure 2.3 for a photograph of an Acadian skirt done in the "barberpole" pattern from 1875.

[128] J. Alphonse Deveau, "Preliminary Report on Source Material Re Acadians before 1755: For Education Media Services" (manuscript compilation, 1980), FC 2043 P74, Nova Scotia Provincial Archives, quoted in Doda, "'The Acadian of our Fancy,'" 253.

The Acadians' dress during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was not the plain, drab, and practical colonial outfit that looms large in our historical imagination. The sources reveal that it was rich in textiles from afar, in colourful patterns with embellishments such as ribbons and lace. Acadians were not at the leading edge of European fashions; however, they were also not entirely aloof in their appearance. The Acadians' place in the borderlands between two colonial empires had an impact on their dress. Although the first French settlers arrived in Acadia wearing the clothes of seventeenth-century rural workers, the wide range of connections and influences in Acadia brought about a change in their attire over the course of their time there. It is impossible to know the extent to which imported cloth was relied on compared to homespun cloth; however, Acadians seem to have mainly dressed in homespun with additions of garments made from imported material. While they used linen, hemp, and wool from their sheep to make most of their garments, through trade they had access to more expensive and imported fabrics such as cotton and silk. Indigenous peoples influenced Acadian dress, but in a relatively limited way as they traded for skins and furs with the Mi'kmaq to make shoes and to line the insides of garments to make warm and durable working clothing. The mix of dress influences in Acadia led to a distinct look. In turn, the settlers went from being French to becoming Acadians.

Chapter Two: Acadian Dress During the Diaspora

"I never knew but one person who had the hardihood to dress differently from what they call 'notre façon.' On one occasion he ventured to put on an English coat, and he has never since, even among his relations, been called his proper name, Joseph Gallant, which has been supplanted by that of 'Joe Peacock.'"-John MacGregor.[129]

In August of 1755 after Charles Lawrence made the decision to expel the Acadian population, he wrote a letter to the other governors of British colonies in North America which stated that "it was judged a necessary and the only practicable measure to divide them among the colonies…and as they cannot easily collect themselves together again it will be out of their power to do any mischief and they may become profitable and it is possible, in time peaceful subjects." In other words, through assimilation, the Expulsion would destroy the Acadians as a people.[130] Although the Expulsion led to a diaspora as the British shipped Acadians all over the world, which caused them to end up in fragmented and often isolated settlements mainly in what is today the Canadian Maritime region and Louisiana, Lawrence failed to destroy the Acadian community.

Discrimination and difficulty re-establishing their lives in the decades following the Deportation caused Acadians to live apart from other social groups and to hold on to their distinct identity during the nineteenth century. Acadians in both the Maritimes and Louisiana continued to dress in unique styles until the late nineteenth century. The nineteenth century was a period of profound social and economic change. Increasing industrialization led to a shift away from a more traditional lifestyle which eventually led Acadians to begin to integrate into

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[129] MacGregor, *Historical and Descriptive Sketches of the Maritime Colonies of British America,* (London: Longman and Co., 1828), 195-196, Sabin Americana.
[130] "Circular letter from Governor Lawrence to the Governors on the Continent," *Report Concerning Canadian Archives for the Year 1905,* 3 vols (Ottawa: Public Archives of Canada, 1906), quoted in Griffiths, *The Contexts of Acadian History,* 63-64.

mainstream North American society by the end of the century.[131] The increasing integration caused Acadians to slowly align their dress with that of styles common in North America. However, anxiety over the rapid societal changes similarly led to community pressure, like that experienced by "Joe Peacock" for Acadians, particularly women, to continue to wear their distinct dress to preserve what they believed was traditional Acadian culture.

Advances in printing meant that descriptions and illustrations of Acadian dress could circulate more easily than during the pre-Expulsion period. Moreover, written accounts of Acadians became more abundant after the publication of Longfellow's *Evangeline* in 1847 because the poem drew tourists to the Maritime region. In addition, Longfellow wrote *Evangeline* during the Romantic Movement, which emphasized picturesque folk life. As a result of romantic sensibilities, travellers tended to be more attuned to the exotic, and, therefore, more likely to notice peculiarities in dress. As a result, they sometimes embellished the unusual aspects of the inhabitants' attire. While they were not entirely making up their descriptions, they exaggerated at times and were occasionally blind to things that felt too normal to them.

Period Context

Between 1755 and 1764, during the Seven Years' War, most of the population, between 13,000 and 18,000 people, was deported.[132] Naomi Griffiths has estimated that each transport ship had about a 20 to 30 percent death toll and that the number of deaths from disease among the Acadians who made it to their destinations was almost as high.[133] About 6,500 of the deportees were sent to the British colonies, some of whom were subsequently deported to

[131] Throughout this thesis the term "mainstream" refers to the dominant North American culture.
[132] Griffiths, *The Contexts of Acadian History,* 89.
[133] Ibid, 93.

England and then to France.[134] Those who stayed in the British colonies were not well received. After the Seven Years' War began in 1756, the colonial governments and the public discriminated against the Acadians and viewed them as a threat out of fear that, as French Catholics in Protestant Anglo-America, they would assist France in the war. Additionally, as refugees in the British colonies, the British colonial governments were responsible for housing and feeding Acadians. Therefore, colonists and administrators perceived Acadians as a drain on wartime resources. Further, the lack of supplies they received left the refugees destitute.[135] On the other hand, others had managed to avoid deportation by fleeing to the St. John River area where they hid as fugitives in the woods and in makeshift refugee camps.[136] Since it was illegal for Acadians to be in Nova Scotia during the war, refugees who were caught were detained in prisons throughout the province.[137] By the end of the Seven Years' War, Acadians refugees were living in the Antilles, France, Louisiana, Quebec and the Maritimes.[138]

In 1763, the Seven Years' War ended in a British victory and the defeat of French power in North America. The following year, The British permitted Acadians to have legal status again in Nova Scotia if they took an Oath of Allegiance to the British government. However, Acadians who chose to take the oath were unable to re-settle the lands they had owned before the war because the British had begun a campaign to settle Nova Scotia with New Englanders. Therefore, between the 1760s and the 1780s, Acadians settled in different regions of the province, including Halifax, the area around Saint Mary's Bay (the municipality of Clare), Yarmouth, Cumberland, Inverness, Richmond, Antigonish, and several other villages in the Chéticamp area. It was

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[134] Nicolas Landry and Nicole Lang, *Histoire de l'Acadie* (Sillery, QC: Septentrion, 2014), 106; Griffiths, *The Contexts of Acadian History,* 100.
[135] Griffiths, *The Contexts of Acadian History*, 105-106; Hodson, *The Acadian Diaspora*, 51.
[136] Landry and Lang, *Histoire de l'Acadie,* 109.
[137] Geoffrey Gilbert Plank, *An unsettled conquest,* 164.
[138] Landry and Lang, *Histoire de l'Acadie,* 164.

difficult to rebuild their lives and communities because, as Catholics, the dominant Anglophone population excluded them from political life.[139]

Some Acadians chose to move to Île Saint-Jean which was part of Nova Scotia during this time. The first settlers, approximately thirty families, arrived in 1764. In 1769 the British government separated Île Saint-Jean from Nova Scotia and in 1798, renamed it Prince Edward Island (PEI). By the early nineteenth century, Acadians in PEI had established communities in Rustico, Rollo Bay, Tignish, Coscumpec, Baie-Egmont, Mont Carmel, and Miscouche.[140]

In the decades following the Seven Years' War, Acadians similarly established settlements in the area that became the province of New Brunswick in 1784. These settlers had either fled to the area while escaping deportation in 1755 or they had returned to the Maritimes after being deported. They primarily established communities in the northern seashores area, the upper Saint John River Valley, around the Petitcodiac, and in the Memramcook Valley.[141]

In addition, between 1757 and 1770, about 1,000 Acadians moved to Louisiana which became a Spanish colony in 1765.[142] In 1785 an additional group of refugees joined them.[143] Most Acadians settled in river settlements in the southwestern area around Bayou Lafourche.[144]

By the beginning of the 1800s, more than 70 percent of the estimated 23,400 Acadians lived in today's Canadian Maritime provinces and Quebec while another 17 percent had settled in Louisiana.[145] Besides the lack of political opportunity and land availability, discrimination from the Anglophone administration and population led Acadians in the Maritimes and

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[139] Landry and Lang, *Histoire de l'Acadie*, 158-160; Alphonse J. Deveau and Sally Ross, *The Acadians of Nova Scotia, Past and Present* (Halifax, NS: Nimbus Publishing, 1992),75-76; Dunn, Ross, and Wallace, "Looking into Acadie," 56.
[140] Landry and Lang, *Histoire de l'Acadie*, 160-161; Arsenault, *Les Acadiens de l'Ile*, 52-69.
[141] Griffiths, *The Contexts of Acadian History,* 96.
[142] Brasseaux, *The Founding of New Acadia,* 73.
[143] Griffiths, *The Contexts of Acadian History,* 100.
[144] Brasseaux, *The Founding of New Acadia,* 112.
[145] Deveau and Ross, *The Acadians of Nova Scotia,* 65. This study does not include Acadian settlements in Quebec.

Louisiana to establish communities apart from other settlers. For example, in 1795 Captain John MacDonald observed that discrimination in Nova Scotia caused Acadians in Cumberland County to live in settlements far away from their English neighbours as "[t]hey keep at a distance from the Intercourse of others…[as their neighbors] readily see the Imperfections on the part of the Acadians…because we have happened to be the Conquerors…[and] We are of a different origin, [and] Religion."[146]

Similarly, when travelling through the Maritimes in 1828, John Macgregor stated that Acadians could be found in "Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Cape Breton, always by themselves in distinct settlements."[147] This caused Acadians to retain their distinct culture because their relative isolation allowed them to continue to communicate in French while the barriers to societal integration placed on Catholics motivated them to preserve their culture instead of being assimilated into the larger English-speaking population.[148] Indeed, MacGregor said that Acadians in PEI "retain a kind of religious feeling, the dress and habits of their ancestors." However, "[a]t Arichat, the Acadians, both men and women, sometimes depart in their dress from the fashion of the Acadians."[149] The fact that the clothing worn by Acadian communities observed by Macgregor was similar enough to have its own "fashion" that men and women would only "sometimes" depart from, indicates that Acadians had a common and distinctive style.

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[146] Library and Archives Canada, Joseph Frederick Wallet Des Barres Fonds, MG23-F1-2, "Des Barres Papers," series 2, Tatamagouche and Minudie Estates, page 40-41, 1754, reproduction number C-1455.
[147] John MacGregor, *Historical and Descriptive Sketches*, 195.
[148] Georges Arsenault, "Le dilemme des Acadiens de l'Ile-du-Prince-Edouard au 19e siècle," *Acadiensis: Journal of the History of the Atlantic Region/Revue d'histoire de la région Atlantique (Fredericton)* 14, no. 2 (April 1, 1985): 30.
[149] MacGregor, *Historical and Descriptive Sketches*, 74, 196.

Acadian Women's Dress in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island

During the late eighteenth century and the nineteenth century, Acadian women continued to dress similarly to the pre-Expulsion period. Women wore an outfit that consisted of a solid-coloured or striped petticoat under an apron with a jacket or mantelet and a cap or a kerchief, often called a handkerchief, as a headdress. The kerchief was sometimes attached to a shawl or worn under a hooded cloak that resembled a veil. For example, during his trip to Nova Scotia in the 1850s, the American Frederic Cozzens commissioned two ambrotypes of Acadian women from Chezzetcook in Halifax wearing jackets with petticoats and kerchiefs (see figures 2.1 and 2.2).[150]

Figures 2.1 and 2. 2 Acadian women in Chezzetcook. Lithographs of ambrotype photographs. [151]

This outfit was similar to the style Macgregor described in 1828. According to Macgregor, in Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Richibucto, the Magdalene Islands, and the River St. John area, women wore "small near calico caps, and sometimes coiffe or handkerchief

[150] Arseneault, "A la Recherche du Costume Acadien," 49.
[151] F.S Cozzens, *Acadia: or, a month with the Blue Noses* (New York: Derby and Jackson, 1859), fig. 2.1 and 2.2.

tied over the head. Their petticoats of woollen stuff are liberally formed as to breadth, striped red, white, and blue."[152] Similarly, Béatrice Craig studied wardrobes of Acadians in nineteenth-century Madawaska by looking at local deeds of maintenance, which were agreements made when an aging couple bequeathed their farm to a son in exchange for support and included a clothing allowance for the husband and the wife. Craig found that during the first half of the nineteenth century, the most common clothing allowance for a woman included a petticoat, a calico mantelet, a muslin cap, one or two cotton aprons, and cotton handkerchiefs.[153]

Around 1850 Marguerite Bellefontaine wore a similar outfit of a striped petticoat with a jacket to church in Chezzetcook. A *Report on the Provincial Museum and Science Library by the Provincial Museum of Nova Scotia for the year 1900* described Bellefontaine's striped skirt as "heavy homespun, black with vertical stripes and narrow lines of white." This petticoat is an example of the continued use of the distinct barberpole pattern after the Expulsion and is simpler than the fashionable skirts worn in most European and North America cultures during this period as it lacks the trimmings and volume created by steel hoops. Similarly, during his trip to the Maritimes in 1860, the French writer Rameau de Saint-Père commented on the use of "[l]a jupe courte rayée" in Chezzetcook. However, striped petticoats may have been reserved for special occasions as the museum believed that "[petticoats] worn everyday and to the Halifax market were

[152] John MacGregor, *British America II* (London: T. Cadell, 1832), 199, Canadiana.
[153] Craig, *Backwoods Consumers and Homespun Capitalists,* 186.

of ordinary grey homespun."[154] In 1830, William Moorsom similarly recorded that in Clare, women's petticoats were not striped, but "usually dark blue, of coarse woollen homespun."[155]

The Museum report described the garment that Marguerite Bellefontaine wore with her stripped petticoat as a jacket or a mantelet that was of "reddish-brown print cotton covered with small vines of crimson roses and green leaves."[156] In 1830, while travelling through Clare, William Moorsom had similarly observed that "[a] little bob-jacket of linen cloth, checked blue-and-white…is covered at the shoulders with a white or coloured handkerchief." However, "[a]t Caraquette, [Macgregor noticed] a partial deviation from their usual dress…a few of the women wearing gowns."[157] This style would have been a bit unusual at this time as the dress of Anglophone North American women often consisted of a gown with a matching bodice.[158]

Typically, Acadian women wore a long cloak like the one Moorsom described to cover their jacket or mantelet. According to the museum report, "over the shoulders, outside of the mantelet, was worn, most of the time, a shawl sometimes light in colours and sometimes of silk but…plain black shawls were mostly used."[159] Similarly, in PEI, Macgregor noticed that some women wore a blue cloak but only on Sundays as "[o]n Sundays their clothes and linen look extremely clean and neat; and they wear over their shoulders a small blue cloth cloak, reaching only half way down the body."[160] While writing about the history of Clare in 1905, Clare's priest

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[154] Provincial Museum of Nova Scotia, "Report on the Provincial Museum and Science Library," 27- 29. These pieces are now in the Nova Scotia Museum collection and are considered to be the oldest surviving Acadian garments; Burnham, *The Comfortable Arts,* 54; Rameau de Saint-Père and LeBlanc, *Le voyage de Rameau de Saint-Père,* 212; Ann Bauermann Wass and Michelle Webb Fandrich, *Clothing through American history: the Federal era through Antebellum, 1786-1860* (Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2010), 302; Beaudoin-Ross, "'A La Canadienne' Once More," 73.
[155] William Moorsom, *Letters from Nova Scotia; comprising sketches of a young country* (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley New Burlington Street,1830), 261-262, Canadiana.
[156] Provincial Museum of Nova Scotia, "Report on the Provincial Museum and Science Library," 27-29.
[157] Moorsom, *Letters from Nova Scotia,* 261; MacGregor, *Historical and Descriptive Sketches,* 196.
[158] Bauermann Wass and Webb Fandrich, *Clothing through American history,* 294.
[159] Provincial Museum of Nova Scotia, "Report on the Provincial Museum and Science Library," 27-29.
[160] MacGregor, *Historical and Descriptive Sketches,* 195.

Pierre-Marie Dagnaud noted that during the eighteenth century women in his parish wore a similar style of outfit that consisted of a shawl with a white cap underneath a black veil.[161] The black veil described by Dagnaud may have been similar to the headdress that de la Varenne commented on in 1756 at Louisbourg of, "a handkerchief, which would serve for a veil too, in the manner they tied it on, if it descended low enough."[162]

According to Quebec clergyman Joseph-Octave Plessis, the headdress the Acadians used was unusual, at least compared to the women in Lower Canada. When he travelled to New Brunswick in 1811 and 1812, he recorded that in Richibucto "[l]eur coiffure n'est réellement qu'une calote de mousseline transparents très-étroite, couvrant le sommet de la tête doublé d'indienne."[163] Although Macgregor similarly thought the headdress of the women in New Brunswick was odd, he saw a slightly different style near the Bay de Chaleur as he noted that "[t]he head dress of the women on the south side of the Bay de Chaleur, is…immense muslin caps, in shape like a balloon."[164] On the other hand, in 1830 Moorsom noted that in Clare "the coiffe, a blue or white handkerchief, covers the head, and is tied under the chin."[165] The Nova Scotia Museum Report stated that in Chezzetcook, until 1910, a black kerchief was "the typical everyday covering for the woman's head and was nearly always black." According to the museum, this style was "folded diagonally into a triangle…worn on the head with the pointed end hanging behind, between the shoulders, the other two ends being tied under the chin" The style the museum described is similar to the style depicted in figure 2.1.[166]

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[161] Dagnaud, *Les Français du sud-ouest de la nouvelle Écosse,* 21.
[162] Monsieur de la Varenne and Ken Donovan, "A Letter from Louisbourg," 124.
[163] Mgr. Joseph-Octave Plessis, *Journal des deux voyages apostoliques dans le golfe Saint-Laurent et les provinces d'En Bas en 1811 et 1812* (Quebec, 1812), 181, Canadiana.
[164] MacGregor, *Historical and Descriptive Sketches,* 196.
[165] Moorsom, *Letters from Nova Scotia,* 261.
[166] Provincial Museum of Nova Scotia, "Report on the Provincial Museum and Science Library," 27-29.

In Sainte-Anne-de-Ruisseau, Rameau de Saint-Père observed women wearing a similar style of a long veil-like hooded cloak that went down to their legs which he called "un grand fichu noir qui rappelle assez la mantilla Espagnole." While this garment was common among Acadians elsewhere, he believed it was an unusual garment, as he wondered, "[d]'où vient cette singulière coiffure dont j'ai retrouvé plus ou moins bien conserve à peu près partout où se sont disséminés les Acadiens proscrits?"[167] According to Rameau de Saint-Père, this was an older style as he commented that in Bouctouche women wore a "mantille noire sur la tête ce qui était la mode autrefois."[168] The mantilla Rameau de Saint-Père described may have been an adaptation of the scarf-shaped mantillas described in the previous chapter. Rameau de Saint-Père's comment suggests that Acadians had continued to wear the mantilla after it had ceased to be used elsewhere. A year after Rameau de Saint-Père's trip to the Maritimes, Frenchman Alexandre Barde visited Acadian communities in Louisiana where he noted that women wore "la mantille" for formal occasions.[169] Perhaps in the northern settlements, mantillas were similarly reserved for special occasions and women wore caps and handkerchiefs for their daily attire.

Acadian Men's Dress in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island

Despite Macgregor's comments about the Acadians' old-fashioned and unusual attire mentioned earlier, the dress of Acadian men was not commented on as frequently as women's attire and outsiders such as Moorsom believed that it was "not so peculiar in this respect," compared to the attire of the women he met in Clare.[170] This may have been because the outfits

[167] Rameau de Saint-Père and LeBlanc, *Le voyage de Rameau de Saint-Père,* 121, 284.
[168] Ibid, 284.
[169] Alexandre Barde and Eugène Dumez, *Histoire des comités de vigilance aux Attakapas* (Saint-Jean-Baptiste, Louisiane: Impr. Du Meschacébé et de l'Avant-coureur, 1861), 47, HathiTrust.
[170] Moorsom, *Letters from Nova Scotia,* 262.

of nineteenth-century men in North America were much simpler than women's as they contained fewer pieces and did not change as frequently as women's did so the difference would not have been as noticeable to outsiders.[171]

During the first half of the nineteenth century, Acadian men wore trousers with a shirt, jacket, and a waistcoat. According to Macgregor, in PEI, "the men dress in round blue cloth jackets, with strait collars, and metal buttons set close together; blue or scarlet waistcoats, and blue trowsers."[172] The outfit Macgregor described does not seem unusual for the period as working men in the United States often wore waist coats and short, fitted round jackets. Similarly, trousers, which were ankle length and fitted, were also common in North America.[173] Perhaps it was the cut or the colours of the Acadians' garments that made Macgregor believe that their dress was unusual. Through deeds of maintenance, Craig found that Acadian men in Madawaska wore a similar style during the first half of the nineteenth century. An Acadian man's clothing allowance generally included flannel or linen shirts, homespun trousers, cloth waistcoats, overcoats and hats which were sometimes beaver hats. In addition, men usually received one greatcoat when they retired.[174] Macgregor similarly observed "[s]ome of the men wearing coats [a]t Caraquette," but he believed coats were not common among Acadians as he noted that they were "a partial deviation from their usual dress."[175] Therefore, Acadians appear to have considered coats to be a style that denoted prestige.

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[171] Anita A. Stamper and Jill Condra, *Clothing through American History the Civil War through the Gilded Age, 1861-1899* (Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2011), 323.
[172] MacGregor, *Historical and Descriptive Sketches,* 195. An illustration by Canadian artist Robert Harris called "French Acadian Sitting in Doorway" from 1880 depicts a similar style to the outfit described by Macgregor. Harris drew several illustrations of Acadians in PEI during the 1880s which can be found at the Confederation Centre of the Arts in Charlottetown.
[173] Bauermann Wass and Webb Fandrich, *Clothing through American history,* 207, 345-346.
[174] Craig, *Backwoods Consumers,* 187-188.
[175] MacGregor, *Historical and Descriptive Sketches,* 196.

In 1860, Rameau de Saint-Père noticed an old-fashioned style in Chezzetcook, as he wrote that the men were wearing "l'ancien juste au corps," a style of jacket worn by wealthy men during the eighteenth century.[176] Rameau de Saint-Père may have observed a wealthier man or a man wearing an outfit used for a special occasion as his description is quite different than Cozzens' who, in 1859, encountered an Acadian man near Halifax wearing "an old tarpaulin hat, home-spun, worsted [woollen] shirt, and tarry canvas trowsers." [177] The Nova Scotia Museum Report described a similar everyday outfit for men in Chezzetcook at this time. According to the museum, men wore a "grey homespun coat and trousers, and a home-knitted white guernsey…[and a] soft black felt hat."[178] Guernseys were knitted woollen sweaters originally worn by fishermen in the Channel Islands during the 1800s and were certainly unusual among other North American cultures. Further, since they do not appear to have been used in other areas, the guernseys mentioned in the museum's report may refer to a style of woollen shirts.[179] However, the museum report also mentioned a "waistcoat…of white piqué with blue-green, brass-edged buttons, and tied with tapes at the back." The museum believed that this garment was "[a] ship article, perhaps of about 1850…worn on holidays by Charles Bellefontaine of West Chezzetcook."[180] Therefore, it appears that Acadian men wore homespun shirts and jackets during the week, but fancier items like imported waistcoats, coats, or the old-fashioned justaucorps for formal occasions.

In the nineteenth century, Acadian men and women continued to wear a mix of leather shoes, skin shoes, and sabots. For example, Moorsom observed Acadians in Clare wearing

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[176] Rameau de Saint-Père and LeBlanc, *Le voyage de Rameau de Saint-Père,* 212.
[177] Cozzens, *Acadia; or, A month with the Blue Noses,* 39.
[178] Provincial Museum of Nova Scotia, "Report on the Provincial Museum and Science Library," 27-29.
[179] Gail Ann Lambert, "'The taxonomy of sweater structures and their origins," (M.S., North Carolina State University, 2002), 128, accessed January 13, 2021, https://repository.lib.ncsu.edu/handle/1840.16/174.
[180] Provincial Museum of Nova Scotia, "Report on the Provincial Museum and Science Library," 27-29.

"[b]lue stockings…and low shoes of black leather, without binding or ornament," while Dagnaud observed moccasins in Clare and skin shoes were used in Chéticamp until the end of the nineteenth century.[181] In addition, in 1828 Macgregor noticed that Acadians in PEI "usually wear sabots (wood shoes)."[182]

During the late eighteenth century and the nineteenth century, Acadian communities heavily relied on homespun garments. In PEI Macgregor noticed that "the industry of their wives and daughters is wonderful…they make their husbands' as well as their own clothes; they spin, knit, and weave."[183] Similarly, Macgregor noted that in the Madawaska "wives make, of the wool of their sheep, and the flax they raise, all the clothes they require; and being ignorant of the luxuries of the world, and what we are accustomed to call comforts, they are, therefore, independent of them."[184]

However, like the pre-Expulsion period, Acadians were not entirely responsible for their clothing production and were not "independent" of luxuries as they continued to participate in trade. As early as 1775, Pierre Doucet, an Acadian from Clare, established a shipping business to exchange local raw materials for manufactured goods and textiles from Boston.[185] Further, even in the geographically isolated Chéticamp, Acadians worked for the fishing and trading company Charles Robin and Company which gave them access to textile-related items in external markets. For instance, over a three-month period in 1788, Anselme Aucoin's purchases included two bundles of shawl material, one silk handkerchief, and a couple pairs of shoes.[186] Similarly, trade

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[181] Moorsom, *Letters from Nova Scotia,* 262; Jeanne Nowlan, "Les souliers de peau," *Les Cahiers de la Société Historique Acadienne* 6, no. 4 (1975): 181; Dagnaud, *Les Français du sud-ouest,* 21.
[182] MacGregor, *Historical and Descriptive Sketches,* 195.
[183] Ibid, 74.
[184] MacGregor, *British America,* 247.
[185] Deveau and Ross, *The Acadians of Nova Scotia,* 92.
[186] Anselme Chiasson, *History and Acadian Traditions of Chéticamp* (St. John's, NFLD: Breakwater Books, 1986), 36-37.

occurred in the Upper Saint John area. The Upper Saint John area was settled by a mix of Acadians and French Canadians with some New Englanders, and Irish Catholics arriving later. The diverse population led to significant movement in the region, which brought Acadians in frequent contact with outsiders with whom they could trade. Further, Acadians in the Madawaska had familial connections to French Canadians in Quebec who wore some garments from local stores and catalogues. In addition, New Englanders and Indigenous traders established a commercial economy in the Lower Saint John area as early as 1763 as merchants from Massachusetts had opened up a trade post in the area where some Acadians obtained textiles and other goods, including some more expensive items.[187] Isaac Stephenson remembered that when he was growing up in the Saint John River area, he would often see "pirogues of the Acadians carrying to market the woollen garments made from their own flocks of sheep."[188]

Community pressure to conserve social customs prevented major changes to dress. According to MacGregor, Acadians hoped to avoid the same fate as the unfortunate Joseph Gallant or "Joe Peacock" mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, whose community ridiculed him for attempting to alter his dress from the Acadian style by donning an "English coat." MacGregor believed that "the dread of being exposed to the derision of the rest, for attempting to imitate the English inhabitants, is one, if not the principal cause that prevents individuals among them, who would willingly alter their dress and habits, from doing so."[189] Since dressing in an English fashion would demonstrate that an individual was beginning to integrate into English society, some Acadians seemed to feel pressure from other community members to resist English styles of dress.

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[187] Craig, *Backwoods Consumers,* 24-27; Beaudoin-Ross, "'A La Canadienne' Once More," 80.
[188] Isaac Stephenson, *Recollections of a long life, 1829-1915* (Chicago: Self-published, 1915), 29.
[189] MacGregor, *Historical and Descriptive Sketches,* 195-196.

As clothing styles became increasingly homogenous in North America over the course of the nineteenth century, a similar phenomenon occurred among rural populations in Europe. Although some rural communities felt ashamed of the judgment of wealthy foreign visitors and tried to modernize their dress, others continued to don local costumes to demonstrate their pride in their distinct identities.[190] Similarly, in the United States, a number of ethnic or religious groups, especially immigrant groups resisted adapting to American dress.[191] For example, since the nineteenth century, the Holdeman Mennonite community in the United States has used clothing as a way of maintaining group cohesion by requiring women to wear plain dress. Community members and ministers continuously scrutinize Holdeman women to make sure that they are wearing the established outfit. If their clothing is found to deviate, the community admonishes them.[192]

Acadians, particularly women, were similarly reprimanded if their dress was found to deviate from an accepted Acadian style. In 1905, the priest in Clare, Dagnaud, wrote about an incident from 1810 that some of his parishioners had recounted to him. According to his parishioners, one day two young women had decided to wear fashionable hats that had been purchased in Saint John to church instead of their usual headdress. When the priest at the time, Father Sigogne, saw them, he publicly chastised the women for disrespecting the traditional Acadian dress. One of Dagnaud's informants remembered that one of the women immediately removed her hat in embarrassment while the priest forced the other to "reprendre l'humble coiffure qu'elle avait si dédaigneusement rejetée."[193]

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[190] Alexander Maxwell, *Patriots Against Fashion: Clothing and Nationalism in Europe's Age of Revolutions* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 155-158.
[191] Stamper and Condra, *Clothing through American History,* 87.
[192] Linda Boynton Arthur, "'Clothing is a Window to the Soul': The Social Control of Women in a Holdeman Mennonite Community," *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 15 (1997): 11-14.
[193] Dagnaud, *Les Français du sud-ouest,* 134.

Acadian Dress in Louisiana

Acadians migrated to Louisiana in the hopes of reuniting with family members separated during the Expulsion and establishing new communities.[194] Louisiana had a diverse population of Creole, French, and Indigenous nations. However, like in the Maritimes, Acadians settled in communities apart from other groups and maintained their distinctiveness.[195] According to an article by R.L. Daniels in *Scribner's Weekly* in 1880*,* the Acadians of Louisiana lived in communities separate from other groups as they were "clannish in the extreme."[196]

The Expulsion affected the dress of the Acadians who settled in Louisiana during the late eighteenth century because they had to adapt to a different climate and to new commercial networks. Louisiana's hot climate made woollen garments unsuitable. Furthermore, Acadians were unable to make garments out of linen because flax did not grow in Louisiana. However, unlike in Nova Scotia, cotton could be cultivated in Louisiana which led the settlers to harvest cotton to make garments that would be more appropriate for the climate. By the 1770s, Acadians had begun to replace their woollen and linen attire with locally grown brown cotton, known as cotonnade.[197] By the beginning of the nineteenth century, Frenchman Charles Robin visited Louisiana and recorded that the women and children spun cotton to make cloth for shirts and other household items.[198]

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[194] Brasseaux, *The Founding of New Acadia,* 73.
[195] Ibid*,* 112.
[196] R. L. Daniels, "The Acadians of Louisiana," in *Scribner's Monthly* XIX no. 743 (New York: Scribner & Co., November 1879-April 1880), 386, HathiTrust.
[197] Brasseaux, *The Founding of New Acadia,* 127, 136; LaComb, "Habillés et déshabillés," 191-192.
[198] Charles Robin, *Voyages dans l'intérieur de la Louisiane, de la Floride occidentale, et dans les isles de la Martinique et de Saint-Domingue, pendant les années 1802, 1803, 1804, 1805, et 1806: contenant de Nouvelles observations sur l'histoire naturelle, la géographie, les moeurs, l'agriculture, le commerce, l'industrie et les maladies des ces contrées, particulièrement sur la fièvre jaune, et les moyens de les prévenir: en outre, contenant ce qui s'est pasé de plus intéressant, relativement à l'établissement,* Vol. 3 (Paris: Chez F. Buisson, 1807), 25, Sabin Americana.

An anonymous unpublished manuscript called the *Breaux Manuscript,* which is believed to have been written by a person of Acadian descent around 1900, described nineteenth-century women's clothing. According to the report, eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century women dressed similarly to their northern cousins as they wore a "skirt…of woolen stuff with stripes of red, yellow, violet, and green" and a fichu that draped over their shoulders.[199] The striped skirts were possibly done in the barberpole pattern as Dorothy Burnham believed that this style was similarly used in Acadian communities in Louisiana.[200] In addition, Robin wrote that women used "ces cotonnades rayées de différentes couleurs" to make "des jupes."[201] In terms of headdress, the "Breaux Manuscript" stated that women wore kerchiefs or sun bonnets that covered the back of the neck.[202] In 1880 Daniels similarly recorded that women wore sun bonnets in pink, blue, or green.[203]

Sonya Lacomb's study of succession records from 1765 to 1817 in the Attakapas, a district which had a large Acadian population, suggests a similar outfit to that described in the "Breaux Manuscript." For example, Lacomb found that with their petticoats, women wore jackets and aprons, and a bonnet or handkerchief on their heads.[204] As was previously mentioned, years later, while travelling through Louisiana in 1861, Alexandre Barde recorded that at formal occasions women exchanged their usual cotonnade outfits for gowns and "la mantille de soie."[205]

In terms of men's dress, the *Breaux Manuscript* noted that at the beginning of the nineteenth century, men wore a homespun waistcoat and a pair of trousers made of cotonnade and

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[199] Jay K. Ditchy, "Early Louisiana French Life and Folklore from the Anonymous Breaux Manuscript," *Louisiana Folklore Miscellany,* Vol. 2, No. 3, quoted in Lacomb, "Habillés et déshabillés," 184-185.
[200] Burnham, *The Comfortable Arts*, 54;
[201] Robin, *Voyages dans l'intérieur de la Louisiane,* 25.
[202] Lacomb, "Habillés et déshabillés," 185.
[203] Daniels, "The Acadians of Louisiana," 387.
[204] Lacomb, "Habillés et déshabillés," 194.
[205] Barde and Dumez, *Histoire des comités de vigilance aux Attakapas,* 47.

a felt or palmetto hat during the week, but on Sundays, men wore an outer coat with tails and breeches.[206] Robin observed the same dress as he wrote that women used the cotonnade to make "pantalons" and "vestes" for the men.[207] Similarly, in her study of succession records, Lacomb found that men wore cotton or woollen shirts with waistcoats and cotonnade pants which were short during the late eighteenth century, but full-length during the nineteenth century.[208]

Although the *Breaux Manuscript* noted that "everybody went barefoot," while studying early nineteenth-century Acadian culture in Louisiana, Carl Brasseaux found that until the Civil War most Acadians wore sabots and men sometimes wore moccasins with knee-length leather leggings. However, Acadians from more affluent backgrounds wore buckled shoes imported from Asia or Europe. [209]

After the American government purchased Louisiana in 1803, Anglo-American settlers began to stream into the region. By the 1840s, the culture had begun to change as Anglo-Americans gained economic and political control and forced some Acadians off their lands. Further, the different areas of Louisiana were becoming increasingly connected. Acadian towns were growing and steamboats and railroads were starting to better connect remote areas. The increasing urbanization led to a divide between wealthy Acadian landowners and merchants, who were becoming assimilated into the Anglophone population, and the Acadian rural poor whom Americans viewed as crude and uneducated and were sometimes called "Cajuns," derived from "Acadien," and considered to be a derogatory label. Consequently, merchants in riverfront communities started to import European fabric for middle-class and upper-class Acadians as this

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[206] Lacomb, "Habillés et déshabillés," 184-185.
[207] Robin, *Voyages dans l'intérieur de la Louisiane,* 25.
[208] Lacomb, "Habillés et déshabillés," 194.
[209] Carl A. Brasseaux, *Acadian to Cajun: Transformation of a people, 1803-1877* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 1992), 26; Ditchy, "Breaux Manuscript," quoted in Lacomb, "Habillés et déshabillés," 185.

segment of the population was beginning to use fewer spinning wheels and looms to adapt their dress to American styles.[210]

Changes in Textile Production and Consumption

Increasing industrialization over the course of the nineteenth century led to changes in the production and consumption of garments among Acadians in both Louisiana and in the Maritime provinces. In the United States, the invention of the sewing machine, which became more readily available after the Civil War, contributed to a shift in textile production from small-scale home manufacture to the mass production of factory-made garments which were increasingly available to all social classes. Similar trends were occurring in Canada. By the late nineteenth century residents increasingly purchased garments from local shops and factories to wear in place of homemade attire. The rise in factory-made garments led to an increase in jobs in industrializing centres, which motivated Maritimers to leave home to find work in the garment factories of the Northeastern United States. By 1880, approximately 4,374 Nova Scotians were employed in Boston as dress makers or tailors where they were able to use their wages to purchase clothing. American styles influenced Canadian dress, especially because women's magazines, which displayed patterns and advertisements for the latest styles, tended to be Canadian editions of American journals.[211] Acadians were not left out of trends as many families similarly began to move to urban industrial centres such as Halifax, Saint John, Toronto, or the northeastern United

[210] Lawrence E. Estaville, Jr., "Changeless Cajuns: Nineteenth-Century Reality of Myth?,"120-132; Jacques M. Henry, and Carl L. Bankston, "Ethnic Self-Identification and Symbolic Stereotyping: The Portrayal of Louisiana Cajuns," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 23, no. 6 (2001):1021-1024.
[211] Barbara E. Kelcey, "Dress Reform in Nineteenth-Century Canada," in *Fashion a Canadian Perspective,* Alexandra Palmer (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 241.

States for employment.[212] For instance, in 1892 when Jeannette Grant travelled to St. Mary's Bay, Nova Scotia, she was a passenger on a mail coach with several Acadian women who were travelling home to visit their families while on vacation from working in Boston.[213] With the rise in industrialization, Acadians started to become more integrated into mainstream North American society. Some scholars consider the period from 1860 to 1890 to be an "Acadian Renaissance" because Acadians were starting to obtain employment in professions that required higher education and training and entering the political sphere, which resulted in an unprecedented political and cultural awakening.[214]

In Europe industrialization induced the inhabitants of areas where regional costumes were still worn to begin adopting mainstream dress. However, the relative isolation and poverty in rural areas caused changes in dress to occur slowly.[215] A similar phenomenon brought on by industrialization occurred among Acadian communities. Although greater integration similarly brought change to textile consumption, their relative separation hindered changes to the distinct style of dress. For example, in 1860 Rameau de Saint- Père believed that "l'isolement extrême dans lequel ils vivent a même conservé parmi eux, une originalité de costume."[216] Although Rameau de Saint-Père exaggerated the level of isolation in Acadian communities, as they had

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[212] Stamper and Condra, *Clothing through American History,* 71-73, 237; Pierre-Marcel Desjardins, Michel Deslierres, and Ronald C. LeBlanc, "Acadians and Economics: From the Colonization to 1960," in *Acadia of the Maritimes: Thematic Studies from the Beginning to the Present,* Jean Daigle (Moncton: NB: Université de Moncton, 1995), 221; Betsy Beattie, "'Going Up To Lynn': Single, Maritime-Born Women in Lynn Massachusetts, 1879-1930," *Acadiensis: Journal of the History of the Atlantic Region/Revue d'histoire de la région Atlantique* 22, no. 1 (October 1, 1992): 65; For a more in-depth discussion on nineteenth century industrialization in Halifax in particular, see Elaine M. Mackay, "Three Thousand Stitches: The Development of the Clothing Industry in Nineteenth-Century Halifax," in *Fashion a Canadian Perspective,* Alexandra Palmer (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 166-178.
[213] Jeannette A Grant, *Through Evangeline's Country* (Boston: Joseph Knight Company, 1894), 28, Canadiana.
[214]Arsenault, *Les Acadiens de l'Ile,* 97.
[215] Maxwell, *Patriots Against Fashion*, 155-156.
[216] Rameau de Saint-Père, Edme, and Ronnie-Gilles LeBlanc, *Le voyage de Rameau de Saint-Père en Acadie: 1860* (Quebec: QC: Les Éditions du Septentrion, 2018), 212.

well-established trade routes by the 1860s, the fact that they lived in more remote communities appears to have caused changes in dress to occur slowly.

In New Brunswick, Acadians from the Madawaska area increasingly left Acadian towns to move to industrializing New England. In addition, even though women continued to produce textiles for domestic use, linen production among Acadians dropped significantly between 1881 and 1891, in part because there were more opportunities for women to work for pay in other industries.[217] Since there was less home production, families began to buy ready-made garments from local stores more frequently. Store-bought clothing came in popular styles. For example, in 1863 the account book at John Emmerson's store in the Madawaska included the purchase of women's skirt hoops, which were fashionable in North America during this time.[218]

Craig's study on deeds of maintenance in the Madawaska suggests that by the 1850s, Acadians were starting to adopt some popular North American styles, as fashionable gowns and hoops were becoming common for special occasions or for a Sunday best outfit. However, women continued to wear older styles, such as the striped petticoats, during this period. For instance, Dorothy Burnham noted that a petticoat made around 1875 by Mathilde Melanson in Scoudouc, New Brunswick, was done in the barberpole pattern (see fig.2.3). A similar trend occurred for men. By the mid-nineteenth century, Craig found that men were still wearing homespun woollen pants, but ready-made cotton pants were also available at local stores and a man of more means often owned a fashionable American-style suit of purchased material.[219]

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[217] Craig, *Backwoods Consumers,* 24; Judith Anne Rygiel, "'The Homespun economy': persistence of handweaving in New Brunswick in the nineteenth century," (PhD diss., Carleton University, 2004), 253, accessed January 13, 2021, ProQuest (NQ94214).
[218] Craig, *Backwoods Consumers,* 200.
[219] Craig, *Backwoods Consumers,* 188-189; Burnham, *The Comfortable Arts,* #56, 78. The petticoat is at the Musée acadien at the Université de Moncton.

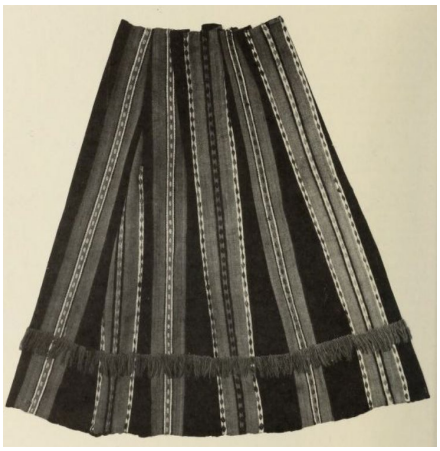

Figure 2. 3 Acadian skirt done in the barberpole pattern. Undated Photograph. *The Comfortable Arts* #56, 63.

By the end of the nineteenth century, Acadians in the Madawaska appear to have adapted to common North American fashions. In 1902 an American named Clarence Pullen published a book on his travels through Acadian communities in the Madawaska Valley. Pullen's book includes several photographs of Acadians dressed in the fashions popular in Anglophone parts of North America during the late nineteenth century rather than distinct Acadian styles.[220] In figure 2.4 Acadian women from the Madawaska area are wearing blouses with puffy round sleeves and long straight skirts with small hats trimmed with flowers instead of mantelets, petticoats, and kerchiefs. This style was popular in North America during the 1880s, so the Acadians are only about a decade behind the current fashions.[221] Similarly, one of the men appears to be wearing a suit jacket instead of the woollen shirt and waistcoat and the other is wearing a bow tie which was a popular accessory among Anglophone men.[222]

[220] See Clarence Pullen, *In Fair Aroostook: Where Acadia and Scandinavia's Subtle Touch Turned a Wilderness into a Land of Plenty* (Bangor, ME: Bangor and Aroostook Railway Company, 1902), 63, Internet Archive.
[221] Stamper and Condra, *Clothing through American History,* 273, 294.
[222] Ibid, 329-330.

Figure 2.4 "There are good times among the Acadians." 1902. Photograph. *In Fair Aroostook*, 63.

The Acadians increasing cultural integration into mainstream society led to an awakening of Acadian nationalism in the Maritimes. Nationalism, which became a powerful movement across Western societies during the nineteenth century, aimed to unite members of a nation based on their shared identity to a geographical region, political power, language, religion, history, and/or tradition. Political scientist Benedict Anderson has proposed that a nation is an imagined political community because even though the members do not know all the other members, they feel united with them. Acadian leaders in the Maritimes hoped to unite all Acadians by preserving their distinct culture.[223] Nationalist sentiment increased among the middle class in New Brunswick between the1860s and the 1880s as more Acadians became increasingly aware of their economic and political inequality compared to the Anglophone population. Additionally, since some Acadians were moving to the United States for work, leaders felt threatened by

[223] Barbara LeBlanc, *Postcards from Acadie: Grand-Pré, Evangeline & the Acadian Identity* (Kentville, NS: Gaspereau Press, 2003), 100-102; Brooks and Mehler, "The Historical Archaeology of Nationalism in Scotland and Bavaria," 8; Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York, NY: Verso, 2006), 6.

assimilation into American society as they feared that emigrants might lose their culture while abroad or that they might bring American culture home with them.[224]

In PEI, a small, educated group of young Acadians was beginning to demand social, political, and economic equality to put them on par with the island's Anglophones. This led to debates on the best way to improve life for Acadians. While some stressed the importance of preserving the Acadian identity through maintaining the French language and culture, others believed that it was necessary to integrate into Anglophone society. The latter group saw their own culture as outdated and believed that traditional values were a barrier to their advancement. One custom they believed needed to be reformed was women's dress as they viewed Acadian styles as a symbol of an outdated society.[225] For example, an anonymous article written in English by someone identifying as an Acadian in the *Summerside Progress* in 1868 urged Acadians to abandon old-fashioned dress as,

> [b]eing an Acadian myself, and having the welfare of my people at heart…in these sketches, I should speak plainly of matters in their social economy which I consider highly desirable to have reformed…Acadians!...to remain in your present condition, wedded to traditions of the past, holding in reverence antiquated notions of exclusiveness, and hugging to your breast old manners and customs, will not conduce to your material prosperity, respectability or happiness! We live in an age of progression, and if you do not keep pace with the age… if you do not assimilate your manners and customs to those prevailing around you,-and if your women do not conform in some near degree to the fashions in dress…you will continue a separate, and, as a matter of necessity, an insignificant people.[226]

According to the writer, women were holding Acadian society back from improvement because of their continued use of traditional dress. The fact that the debate surrounding the

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[224] Sheila Muriel Andrew, *The Development of Elites in Acadian New Brunswick, 1861-1881* (Montreal, QC: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), 5; Sheila Andrew, "More than a Flag of Convenience: Acadian Attitudes to Britain and the British Around the Time of Queen Victoria's 1887 Jubilee," *History of Intellectual Culture* 5, no. 1 (2005), 5.
[225] Arsenault, *Les Acadiens de l'Ile,* 97-100.
[226] "Manners and Customs of the French Acadians in Prince Edward Island, -Reform, No 1," *Summerside Progress* 1 June 1868, Google News Archive.

preservation of cultural customs was centred on women indicates that men had begun to adopt mainstream dress by the late 1860s while women had not. However, more significantly, the American legal scholar Martha Minow has argued that discussions on cultural change tend to focus on women because men are often more involved in the public sphere where integration into the dominant society is necessary to be successful, while women are assigned to the domestic sphere where integration is not as urgent and, therefore, occurs more slowly causing traditions to be preserved. Consequently, women's bodies reinforce cultural values through visual symbols such as cultural dress.[227]

The belief in women's role as cultural preservers was particularly potent within the British empire during the late nineteenth century. Many people feared the loss of traditions due to the changing nature of a rapidly industrializing society and believed that women were responsible for preserving the moral integrity in the face of these changes. Contemporaries worried that if women stopped participating in traditional customs, such as spinning and weaving, they would promote an erosion of the social order. Further, a sense of uneasiness with the changing times was directed at women as society increasingly viewed clothing consumption as part of the female sphere with women in charge of the family's appearance, as they were the ones who shopped for and made the family's clothing.[228] In the Acadian context, since women's dress was more distinctive than men's, it was particularly susceptible to arguments for women's dress as symbolic of the group identity.

The belief in a relationship between women's dress and maintaining a traditional lifestyle in the face of modernity was similarly present in New Brunswick. Judith Rygiel has noted that

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[227] Martha Minow, "About women, about culture: About them, about us," *Daedalus* 129, no. 4 (2000): 126-128.
[228] Joan N. Burstyn, *Victorian education and the ideal of womanhood* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 31; Catherine E Kelly, *In the New England Fashion: Reshaping Women's Lives in the Nineteenth Century* (Cornell, NY: Cornell University Press, 2018), 224-234.

after the first French-language newspaper in the Maritimes, the *Moniteur Acadien,* was founded in 1867, Acadians wrestled with the tension between change and the maintenance of traditional values. In early issues, the *Moniteur Acadien* included lines from Longfellow's *Evangeline,* because the newspaper's editors considered the poem's heroine, Evangeline, to be the ideal nineteenth-century woman as she spent her time doing traditional activities such as spinning and weaving. In addition, as the ideal Acadian woman, Acadian correspondents wrote editorials that invoked Evangeline in arguments over the proper way for Acadian women to act and dress. In a debate in 1880, two male correspondents discussed the importance of traditional female tasks. After the first correspondent named "Evangeline" stated that Acadian women made better wives than other women because of their superior housekeeping skills, the other correspondent responded by noting that some women in his community had decided to become more modern by giving up their traditional dress.[229]

Figure 2.5 Acadian girl in PEI wearing the Acadian dress in 1880. [230]

[229] Rygiel, "'The Homespun economy,'" 175-177.
[230] George Monro Grant and L. R. O'Brien, *Picturesque Canada: the country as it was* (Toronto: Belden Bros,1882), 864, fig. 2.3 Illustration by Robert Harris, 1880, Internet Archive.

Like the Holdeman's rule that women should continue to wear plain dress to safeguard Mennonite culture, nationalists viewed women's dress as necessary to preserve a distinct community. By continuing to wear Acadian styles, Acadian women were preserving the nation by keeping the culture alive. For example, in 1887, while visiting Nova Scotia, the French-Canadian priest Henri-Raymond Casgrain heard a story from Parker, the priest of an Acadian parish near Yarmouth, about the importance of women's dress to Acadian identity. While on a train going from Yarmouth to Digby, Parker recognized two Acadian girls on board who were wearing American-style dress. When the two girls encountered two older Acadian women dressed in the Acadian style, they made fun of the other women's outfits, at which point the priest, who had overheard them, scolded the girls for mocking the traditional dress as he said, "n'avez-vous pas honte? Vous, des Acadiennes! Vous rougissez de votre nationalité![231] In other words, by straying from traditional attire, the two girls were forsaking their national culture.

While Acadians, particularly women, were sometimes dissuaded from straying from regional attire, Parker's story demonstrates that in Nova Scotia, during the late nineteenth century, Acadians were dressing in popular North American styles while still holding on to traditional dress. For example, in a portrait of an Acadian couple, Romain Amirault and Domatille LeBlanc, from Buttes-Amirault around 1870, Romain Amirault is wearing the three-piece suit with a frock coat that was common in mainstream society during the period. Similarly, his wife, Domatille LeBlanc, is wearing a fashionable gown rather than a striped skirt, mantelet, and handkerchief.[232] Since this photograph was taken in a studio, the couple's outfits may have been chosen for the occasion rather than for everyday use. However, the fact that their outfits

[231] Abbé H. R Casgrain, *Un pélerinage au pays d'Evangeline* (Quebec: Imprimerie de L.J. Demers, 1887), 385-386, Canadiana.
[232] Dunn, Ross, and Wallace, "Looking into Acadie," 77.

appear to be more aligned with mainstream dress, signifies that their day-to-day attire was similarly in tune with popular North American styles. In addition, even though Acadians in Nova Scotia were increasingly purchasing some fashionable textiles, some Acadians continued to wear homespun garments in Acadian styles, especially in rural areas like Sainte-Anne-du-Ruisseau where Rameau de Saint-Père noticed that "[q]uelques-uns des plus riches portaient des vêtements de drap marchand, mais ils étaient en petit nombre." [233]

By the time the American Eliza Brown Chase travelled to Nova Scotia in 1884, she thought Acadian dress was not unusual; just slightly outdated as "the young girls array themselves in hats and costumes which are only two or three years behind the prevailing mode." However, Brown Chase noticed that the black kerchief and cloak were still worn in Clare, but only by middle-aged and elderly women on Sundays as "the attire of the middle-aged and elderly women is striking and peculiar. For Sundays, this is invariable black throughout…[t]he dress is of plain bombazine or alpaca, a shawl folded square, and over the head a large silk handkerchief." Brown Chase observed that "[d]uring the week, a calico dress with [a] long white apron is worn by women and children, and over the head a light chintz handkerchief, or a gay 'bandannas;'-quite suggestive of the every-day wear of a foreign peasantry." Further, "[i]n the drive to Digby," Brown Chase similarly noticed, "a bright-eyed, pretty little maiden, who wears a gay red handkerchief in place of a hat."[234] Although the black kerchief and cloak were tossed aside during the week, kerchiefs were still common for daily wear. In addition, in other rural parts of North America, calico was a popular fabric among working women because it was

[233] Rameau de Saint-Père and LeBlanc, *Le voyage de Rameau de Saint-Père,* 121.
[234] Eliza Brown Chase, *Over the Border: Acadia, the Home of "Evangeline"* (Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1884), 161-162, 113, Nineteenth Century Collections Online.

inexpensive and durable. Therefore, Acadians may have been using it for the same reason, which would make the daily outfit quite ordinary other than the continued use of the kerchief.[235]

Similarly, in 1892 when Jeannette A. Grant travelled to Clare, she commented on the use of the traditional kerchief and black cloak by some women at church. According to Grant, "a good many women and some young girls in the congregation wore the couvre-chef in place of bonnet or hat. This is a black kerchief of wool or silk, worn in three-corner fashion and tied under the chin. The dress was also black."[236] However, Grant also observed a group of Acadians going to the town's picnic grounds wearing more fashionable garments as instead of commenting on the unusualness of Acadian dress, she noted that they were "[g]ayly dressed girls with bright parasols."[237] Grant's comments suggest that by the end of the nineteenth century, some Acadians continued to wear the old-fashioned Acadian dress, especially among the elderly; however, women increasingly added garments in popular North American styles to their wardrobes. Since neither Brown Chase nor Grant commented on the dress of the men, perhaps by the 1880s, men's dress had become aligned with mainstream North American styles or was at least similar enough to go unnoticed.

In Louisiana, the increase in urbanization and the improvement of transport infrastructure after the Civil War forced cultural change on Acadians. For example, in the 1880s, affordable manufactured cloth was available with the arrival of the railroad and began to push out the reliance on cotonnade. Further, merchants and peddlers increasingly brought expensive products from Europe, such as Spanish shawls, to the homes of wealthy Acadians. The process of assimilation to Anglo-American society similarly sped up during the years following the Civil

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[235] Stamper and Condra, *Clothing through American History,* 68.
[236] Grant, *Through Evangeline's Country*, 34.
[237] Ibid, 53.

War, particularly in regard to enforcing the use of English in Louisiana. For instance, in 1864 the Louisiana Legislature adopted a law that made public education English only. Consequently, by the turn of the century, three quarters of the residents of all but three Acadian parishes could speak English.[238] According to R. L. Daniels, as a result of assimilation, by the 1880s "[t]hese peculiar people are often spoken of as passing away," as "the more intelligent that remain are rapidly becoming Americanized-losing their distinctive characteristics through English education, social intercourse, and intermarriages with their American compatriots."[239]

However, in the "smaller bayous," there were still "genuine Acadians everywhere, unchanged too, in character and mode of living from what they were fifty-perhaps one hundred-years ago."[240] Daniels was exaggerating the timeless isolation of the rural class as they had access to markets and the larger cities and towns by steamship and rail. On the other hand, his description demonstrates that the Acadians lived in a stratified society where the wealthy in urban areas were becoming Americanized, while some members of the rural poor were still wearing distinct dress despite increasing change. Indeed, Daniel's description of the clothing that rural Acadians wore was a mix of more traditional homespun and contemporary styles. For example, while Daniels noted that in rural areas Acadians brought their homemade cotonnade and "[b]askets, stuffed with bandanna handkerchiefs"[241] to sell at the market for manufactured items, he also observed women wearing fashionable gowns of imported cotton with "closely fitting bodice and long, flowing skirts."[242]

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[238] Estaville Jr., "Changeless Cajuns," 127-138; Jean Barry Ancelet, Jay Dearborn Edwards, and Glen Pitre. *Cajun Country* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 1991), 39-42.
[239] Daniels, "The Acadians of Louisiana, 383.
[240] Ibid, 383.
[241] Ibid, 385.
[242] Ibid, 387.

According to the *Breaux Manuscript*, by 1900 Acadians wore "clothing cut more in keeping with the present style." The writer further noted that the change in dress had been drastic as he commented that "in comparing the old costume with that of our own times, one is struck by the great change in forty years." The evolution in dress appears to have been due to the shift towards ready-made factory garments as the report stated that "[n]owadays all these homemade objects are so easily come by that people prefer to buy the commercial product."[243]

Some women continued to dress in Acadian styles into the early twentieth century.[244] In 1902 the French historian Gaston Du Boscq de Beaumont noticed women wearing the striped skirts, caps, and veils in PEI. However, according to Du Boscq, only elderly women still wore the Acadian outfit as "les jeunes filles le délaissent."[245] Therefore, Acadian distinctiveness persisted after the Expulsion. However, the diaspora brought on some regional variations. The changes due to industrialization during the nineteenth century led to a gradual alignment of Acadian dress with that of mainstream North America. Change to clothing styles was slow and the transition was uneven between communities. Outsiders noticed the Acadian dress and believed that it was distinctive and old-fashioned. Within Acadian communities themselves, it was the subject of some tensions between tradition and modernity.

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[243] Ditchy, "Breaux Manuscript," quoted in Lacomb, "Habillés et déshabillés," 184-186.
[244] Arsenault, "Le dilemme," 39.
[245] Gaston Du Boscq de Beaumont, *Une France oubliée: l'Acadie* (Paris: Hachette et cie, 1902), 253, quoted in Jeanne Arseneault, "Le costume traditionnel français en Acadie," In *La Vie quotidienne au Québec: histoire, métiers, techniques et traditions: mélanges à la mémoire de Robert-Lionel Séguin,* René Bouchard and Robert-Lionel Séguin (Sillery, QC: Presses de l'Université du Québec, 1983).

Chapter Three: The Acadians and Their Dress are Reimagined

While Acadians were busy wrestling over the desire to preserve their distinctiveness through unique styles of dress and the perceived need to adapt to mainstream society for community advancement, an outsider was rewriting their identity. Set during the pre-Deportation period, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's 1847 poem *Evangeline* describes the Acadians as Norman peasant farmers living in the bucolic paradise of Grand Pré until their community is destroyed in 1755. The fascination with the idea of a traditional national folk during the Romantic Movement caused the poem's heroine, Evangeline, to become an iconic figure in popular culture as a symbol of simpler and better times and the Acadian people to become widely associated with Norman peasants. Rooted and appreciated in the context of a romantic movement that prized folk tradition, *Evangeline* became a highly respected poem with a widespread readership.

This chapter discusses how the romantic sensibilities of the times led to a reconfiguration of the Acadian identity and experience through the lens of *Evangeline* during the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century with the creation of a national costume for Evangeline that closely resembled what became commonly known as the Normandy peasant costume. Popular culture spread the image of the Normandy peasant costume in illustrations of *Evangeline,* costume pageants, on stage, and to promote tourism to Nova Scotia, which led outsiders to view Acadians as Norman peasants.

Longfellow's *Evangeline*

The Acadian Expulsion was not very well known before the publication of *Evangeline* in 1847.[246] *Evangeline* tells the story of a young Acadian woman by that name who is separated from her fiancé Gabriel when they are deported from the village of Grand Pré during the Acadian Expulsion. Evangeline spends the rest of her life searching for him in New England, Louisiana, and the American frontier, but is not reunited with him until she is an old woman working as a nun in Philadelphia and Gabriel is on his deathbed. The poem describes the Acadians as simple, peaceful, and devoutly Catholic peasant farmers who lived in social harmony until their pastoral community was barbarically destroyed by the British.[247]

Evangeline was an overnight success and inspired dramatizations and films as the poem's themes were reflective of nineteenth-century religious beliefs and social values. Evangeline is the ideal Victorian woman. She remains loyal and faithful to Gabriel by refusing to settle with any other man, which also proves her faithfulness to God's will, and she obediently follows the guidance of the men around her. Consequently, until the First World War, Longfellow was the most popular American poet and Evangeline was the first well-known American heroine.[248] Further, the story of the separated lovers came to represent the entire Acadian people. Evangeline became the symbol of the innocent suffering of the Acadians, the Acadian Deportation became widely known, and Grand Pré became associated with an Eden on Earth.[249]

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[246] LeBlanc, *Postcards from Acadie,* 51.
[247] Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Alice M. Longfellow, and Horace Elisha Scudder, *Evangeline, a Tale of Acadie* (Boston: Houghton and Mifflin Company, 1896), HathiTrust.
[248] Griffiths, "Longfellow's 'Evangeline,'" 28; Manning Hawthorne and Dana Longfellow, "The Origin of Longfellow's 'Evangeline,'" *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 41, no. 3 (1947): 200-201; Pierre Dairon, "Evangeline: American and Acadian Icon," *Jefferson Journal of Science and Culture,* 1 (2011): 41-42; Mark Niemeyer, "Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's Evangeline: A Tale of Acadie and the Ambiguous Afterlife of the History of the Acadians," *Canadian Review of American Studies* 48, no. 2 (2018): 122.
[249] LeBlanc, *Postcards from Acadie,* 55-57.

Longfellow used several different sources to write *Evangeline.* According to a letter he wrote to a friend, the main two were the Abbé Raynal and Thomas Haliburton, "the first for the pastoral simple life of the Acadians; the second for the history of their banishment."[250] L'abbé Guillaume Thomas Raynal was a French historian and philosopher, and Haliburton was a well-known Nova Scotian writer, lawyer, politician, and judge. Longfellow got his information on the social, political, and military context of Acadia and its history from Haliburton's two-volume history of Nova Scotia which was published in Halifax in 1829. Longfellow obtained both volumes of Haliburton's work from Harvard College Library in 1841.[251] The Abbé Raynal's 1770 ten-volume *Philosophical and Political History* account of the Acadians described them as peaceful and innocent villagers living in a "Golden Age" before the British violently expelled them from Acadia. It is evident that Longfellow relied heavily on Raynal's work as he described Acadians in a similar fashion, as simple and devout peasants living in peace despite the fact that they had not been peasants. Further, the number of conflicts for Acadia between the British and the French during the pre-Expulsion period shows that Acadia had not been a pastoral paradise and had never had a Golden Age.[252] In addition, Longfellow relied on Frederic Pluquet's 1834 *Contes Populaires*, about the history of the people of Normandy.[253] *Contes Populaires* influenced Longfellow's description of the Acadians in *Evangeline* as he frequently referred to them as Normans despite the fact that they were eighteenth-century settlers in Nova Scotia whose ancestors had mostly come from Central-western France rather than Normandy.[254]

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[250] Longfellow, Longfellow, and Scudder, *Evangeline,* 6.
[251] Hawthorne and Longfellow, "The Origin of Longfellow's 'Evangeline,'" 169-174.
[252] LeBlanc, *Postcards from Acadie,* 54; Hawthorne and Longfellow, "The Origin of Longfellow's 'Evangeline,'" 169; Griffiths, "Longfellow's 'Evangeline,'" 32-33.
[253] Alfred R. Landry, "The Poem Evangeline," *Les Cahiers de la Société Acadienne* 3, no. 3 (1969): 113-116.
[254] McKay and Bates, *In the Province of History,* 15.

The Romantic Revival inspired the reimagining of the Acadians as Norman peasants in *Evangeline*. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, members of the wealthier classes viewed rural dwellers as primitive and backwards peasants.[255] However, beginning in the 1770s, Romanticism, a literary and intellectual movement, promoted the importance of nature and the antiquity as people began to believe that the distinct history of a society demonstrated a nation's true identity.[256] Romanticism became popular after the German philosopher Johann Gottfried Von Herder described all of the people in the nation from the king to the peasant as one "volk" with a national and distinctive folk culture in his 1791 book *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*. Von Herder's ideas spread through Europe with an English translation available in 1800 and a French one in 1828. Nineteenth-century European thought built on Von Herder's work to emphasize the belief that in every society there had once been a golden age of social harmony and unity that modernity had destroyed. As the educated classes residing in the cities searched for an escape from the changes that the increasing industrialization during the nineteenth century brought to bear on traditional lifestyle, they began to view rural people as living a primitive existence in static villages that were untouched by modernity, and came to believe that the peasants were the truest representation of the national character. Further, they believed that the customs and beliefs of rural dwellers were the traditional practices of the nation's original folk.[257]

As members of the bourgeoisie flocked to the countryside to find the folk and observe their traditional customs, travel literature that emphasized the romantic and picturesque qualities

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[255] James R. Lehning, *Peasant and French: Cultural Contact in Rural France During the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 12; McKay, Ian. *The Quest of the Folk: Antimodernism and Cultural Selection in Twentieth-Century Nova Scotia* (Montreal, QC: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009), 226.
[256] LeBlanc, *Postcards from Acadie,* 102.
[257] Maxwell, *Patriots Against Fashion,* 154-155; McKay, *The Quest of the Folk,* 99.

of rural regions and their inhabitants became popular. In France, images of picturesque life in rural areas, especially Brittany and Normandy, frequently appeared in illustrated texts.[258] British elites particularly sought out Normandy as a romantic peasant region because it was easy for travellers to access. Travel to the region caused the Norman peasant to become so well-known to outsiders that by the end of the century tourist literature such as postcards advertised Normandy by describing its picturesque coastline and peasants wearing what were considered to be traditional Norman costumes.[259] Similarly to the way that travellers wrote about the dress of Acadians during the nineteenth century, the possibility of seeing "exotic" and traditional regional costumes lured urbanites to rural areas such as Normandy because peasant dress was closely associated with the folk ideal. Nationalists began to view peasants and their costumes as symbols of the genuine "national" or "folk" costume of a region. They often invoked women's costume to represent the folk, rather than men's, because women were symbolic of an ethnic group's identity and were more closely associated with traditional values. Like the way that some Acadians' uneasiness with modernity had led them to believe that women should wear traditional styles, urbanites' anxiety over the ways in which industrialization was changing society caused them to emphasize the importance of women dressed in national costumes to show a continuity with traditional national values.[260]

However, as industrialization intensified over the course of the century, even the inhabitants of rural areas began to wear mainstream European dress. The beginning of the decline of regional outfits was connected to the fear of the loss of traditional values during the

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[258] Lehning, *Peasant and French,* 5-6; Maura Ann Coughlin, "'The Artistic Origins of the French Peasant-Painter, Jean François Millet: Between Normandy and Barbizon," (PhD diss., New York University, 2001), 40-41, accessed April 20, 2021, ProQuest (3009297).
[259] François Guillet, "La Normandie en ses costumes: la construction d'une identité régionale au XIX^{e} siècle," In *Les Costumes Régionaux,* Jean-Pierre Lethuillier (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2009), 47-58.
[260] Maura Coughlin, "Millet's Milkmaids," *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide* 2, no. 1 (Winter 2003): 9; Maxwell, *Patriots Against Fashion*, 169-170.

industrializing period as urbanites began to worry that peasants were beginning to lose their distinct culture and, in turn, that the essence of the nation's character was disappearing. This nostalgia for the folk past led elites to see themselves as the guardians of the nation's character so they diligently travelled to rural areas to collect images of the national peasantry before they disappeared. For example, artists painted peasants wearing traditional costumes, many of which were documented in literature. Even though peasant outfits were diverse, costume books portrayed each region with its own specific national dress which caused it to become associated with one specific national costume that became symbolic of the entire area. The outfits depicted in costume collections were often older styles of clothing inhabitants rarely still wore, such as sixteenth-century court dress or festive costume. However, elites preferred these costumes because they made the inhabitants appear more exotic and authentic. Costume collection books illustrating the Norman peasant costume were published as early as 1784 with Jacques Grasset de Saint-Sauveur's picturesque travel journal *Costumes Civils actuels connus de tous les peoples de la terre*. It included descriptions of the costumes, customs, and virtues of the inhabitants of Normandy.[261]

Literature on Brittany and Normandy was tied together as many illustrators went to visit both and depicted them in similar ways. The popular image of Norman and Breton peasants was of dishevelled, long-haired men wearing bloomers and large hats alongside women with tall headdresses wearing clogs.[262] Norman headdresses, which were sometimes illustrated as high, pointed cone-shaped hats draped with lace and muslin, and other times as round and flat bonnets with lappets, came to symbolize the Norman peasant. Although these headdresses varied based on social codes that locals would have understood, tourists tended to view all of the variations as

[261] Maxwell, *Patriots Against Fashion*, 153-160; Guillet, "La Normandie en ses costumes," 47-58.
[262] Coughlin, "The Artistic Origins," 63.

a general Norman style.[263] English travel literature similarly invoked the stereotypes of Norman and Breton peasants. For example, in 1880 Henry Blackburn's *Breton folk: An artistic tour in Brittany* depicted similarly dressed Breton peasants.[264]

Figure 3. 1 Image of the Breton peasant. [265]

Jean-François Millet became a popular painter of the Norman peasant. After his first painting of the Norman Milkmaid appeared in 1840, he became well known for images of a woman wearing simple old-fashioned dress and a tall headdress carrying a jug over her shoulder in a rural landscape. The milkmaid became an iconic symbol of the region of Normandy. A few years later, the French writer Léon Curmer publicized the stereotypical Norman peasant costume in the series *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes. Encyclopédie morale du dix-neuvième siècle*. Curmer's books contained descriptions of local costumes and customs to make peasant regions appear primitive, picturesque, and uncorrupted by modernization. *Les Français peints par eux-*

[263] Guillet, "La Normandie en ses costumes," 47-58.
[264] Henry Blackburn and Randolph Caldecott, *Breton Folk: an Artistic Tour in Brittany* (London: S. Low, Marston, Searle, & Riverton, 1880), 35, HathiTrust.
[265] "Les Campagnes," in *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes: encyclopédie morale du dix-neuvième siècle: Province*, Henri Léon Curmer (Paris: Curmer, 1840) Vol. 3, fig. 3.1, Internet Archive.

mêmes demonstrates that the milkmaid image was becoming an important symbol of Normandy as the section on Normandy includes the artist Hippolyte Bellangé's rendition of the Norman milkmaid or "laitière."[266]

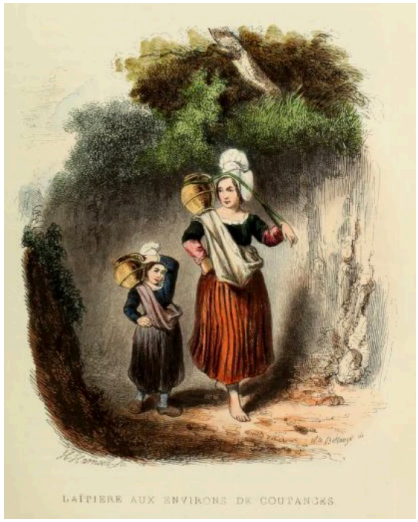

Figure 3. 2 Image of the Norman Milkmaid by Hippolyte Bellangé. [267]

The themes of Romanticism were also popular among Americans. The Colonial Revival movement re-imaged early Americans as simple and hard-working farmers in the period prior to industrialization.[268] *Evangeline* was a response to the romanticism of the period as Longfellow portrayed the Acadians in his poem as Norman peasants living in a quaint and almost medieval village that is cut off from modernity. The inhabitants live in,

> Acadie, home of the happy…in the Acadian land, on the shores of the Basin of Minas, Distant, secluded, still, the little village of Grand-Pré lay in the fruitful valley. Vast meadows stretched to the eastward…there in the midst of its farms, reposed the Acadian village. Strongly built were the houses, with frames of oak and of hemlock. Such as the

[266] Coughlin, "Millet's Milkmaids," 5-10; "Le Normand," *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes. Encyclopédie morale du dix-neuvième siècle: Province,* Henri Léon Curmer (Paris: L. Curmer, 1841) Vol. 2, 165-166, Internet Archive.
[267] "Le Normand," *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes: encyclopédie morale du dix-neuvième siècle: Province*, Henri Léon Curmer (Paris: Curmer, 1841) Vol. 2, fig. 3.2.
[268] Beverly Gordon, "Costumed Representations of Early America: A Gendered Portrayal, 1850-1940," *Dress* 30, no. 1 (2003):4, doi: 10.1179/036121103805253280.

> peasants of Normandy built in the reign of the Henries…the homes of peace and contentment. Thus dwelt together in love these simple Acadian farmers.[269]

The pastoral Acadian land of simple happy peasants is well suited to a Grimm's fairy tale, which is not surprising as Longfellow was inspired by the literature of his time. In 1835 he published his travel memoir *Outre-mer: A Pilgrammage Beyond the Sea* about his journey through Spain, Germany, Italy, and France between 1826 and 1829.[270] *Outre-mer* was a nostalgic travel book about a pilgrim who travels to Europe to experience its spiritual beauty. *Outre-mer* is an argument for a return to tradition in the face of modern industrialization as the pilgrim ends his journey by returning to North America to spread knowledge of the charm of the Old World to industrializing North Americans who he believes have become cold and utilitarian.[271] *Outre-mer* also influenced Longfellow's decision to describe the Acadians in *Evangeline* as Normans. In the chapter "The Norman Diligence," Longfellow described the scenery in Normandy as a rural paradise similar to his description of Grand Pré as "[h]ere and there a cluster of chestnut-trees shaded a thatch-roofed cottage…I felt that I was in a prosperous, hospitable, and happy land." Further, Acadians were sometimes mistakenly labelled as Normans in popular literature. In *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes*, a section that characterizes the customs in Miquelon states that "des habitants de Saint-Pierre sont de race acadienne mêlée de sang normand."[272]

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[269] Longfellow, Longfellow, Scudder, *Evangeline,* 11-14.
[270] Ronald E. McFarland, *The Long Life of Evangeline: A History of the Longfellow Poem in Print, in Adaptation and in Popular Culture* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 2010), 17.
[271] Thomas H Pauly, "Outre-mer and Longfellow's Quest for a Career," *The New England Quarterly* 50, no. 1 (March 1977): 41.
[272] "L'Habitant Des Iles Saint-Pierre Et Miquelon," *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes. Encyclopédie morale du dix-neuvième siècle: Province,* Henri Léon Curmer (Paris: L. Curmer, 1841) Vol. 3, 426, Internet Archive.

In addition, the Normans in *Outre-mer* wore the symbolic costume of the Norman peasant. *Outre-mer* described a woman who was "decked out with a staid white Norman cap, nicely starched and plaited, and nearly three feet high, a rosary and cross about her neck, a linsey-woolsey gown, and wooden shoes."[273] The dress of the Acadians in *Evangeline* further depicts them as the romantic folk as Evangeline's dress is strikingly similar to that of the Norman women in *Outre-mer* and not at all like the jackets, striped skirts, and black veils the real Acadians wore. The poem described Evangeline as carrying "her chaplet of beads and her missal, wearing her Norman cap and her kirtle of blue, and the earrings brought in the olden time from France, and since, as an heirloom, handed down from mother to child, through long generations."[274]

Evangeline's Norman cap establishes her as a member of the folk. Her kirtle further romanticizes the past by depicting her as timeless and exotic since kirtles were a medieval style of gown with a fitted, and often laced, bodice with an attached skirt that had been used until the seventeenth century and only very rarely afterwards.[275] Longfellow described the other Acadian women in *Evangeline* wearing a similar old-fashioned outfit as "[m]atrons and maidens sat in snow-white caps and in kirtles Scarlet and blue and green, with distaffs spinning the golden Flax for the gossiping looms."[276] While the specific garments they wear designate them as old-fashioned peasants, the fact that Longfellow had them completing what society considered to be feminine tasks further denotes the ideal of a romanticized simple and traditional past. Consequently, Evangeline became a popular symbol of older and better ways.[277] Further, since

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[273] Henry Wadsworth Longfellow *Outre-mer: A Pilgrammage Beyond the Sea* (Routledge & Company, 1857), 13-15.
[274] Longfellow, Longfellow, Scudder, *Evangeline,* 15.
[275] Staples and Shaw, *Clothing through American history,* 223.
[276] Longfellow, Longfellow, Scudder, *Evangeline,* 13.
[277] McKay, *The Quest of the Folk,* 261-262.

women were seen as the keepers of tradition, *Evangeline* had to have a heroine rather than a hero, as a man would not have been able to embody the romantic ideal as profoundly. The significance of choosing a woman as the main character can be further revealed by the fact that Longfellow was not concerned with Gabriel's dress, as the only description of Gabriel notes that he was "a valiant youth, and his face, like the face of the morning, [g]laddened the earth with its light."[278] Consequently, this vague description implies that Gabriel could have existed anywhere at any time.

The romanticism of the time affected the way that Acadians were portrayed in illustrations of *Evangeline.* During the second half of the nineteenth century, British and American publishers commissioned artists to depict scenes from the poem. Illustrators produced images of Acadia's landscape, group scenes in Grand Pré, and the poem's characters, especially Evangeline. Illustrators built on the image evoked by Longfellow's few details and drew from the broader cultural references to French peasant dress. The first illustrated edition of *Evangeline* appeared in 1850 by David Bogue in London, with 45 wood engravings. In this volume, Miles Birket Foster's illustrations contribute to the idea that Acadia was an idyllic peasant haven as Grand Pré and Acadia appear to be rustic English villages. The illustrations from other editions similarly evoke a sense of nostalgia for a romantic past as they do not reflect the actual landscape of Nova Scotia.[279] Further, even though illustrations of Evangeline varied slightly, they all depicted her wearing a combination of the outfit described in the poem and the stereotypical Norman outfit, which made her instantly recognizable to readers. For example, in the 1853 Grosset and Dunlap edition, John Gilbert drew Evangeline to appear like the Norman women in

[278] Longfellow, Longfellow, Scudder, *Evangeline*, 20.
[279] McFarland, *The Long Life of Evangeline*, 93, 136-141; Andrew J.B. Johnston, "Imagining Paradise: The Visual Depiction of Pre-Deportation Acadia, 1850-2000," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 38, no.2 (2004): 107-110.

Les Français peints par eux-mêmes with a high Norman cap and a kirtle with a cross necklace (see fig. 3.3).

Figure 3. 3 Gilbert's Evangeline resembles the popular images of Norman peasants.[280]

Similarly, in 1883 the well-known American book illustrator Felix Octavius Carr Darley drew Evangeline in a laced kirtle with a Norman cap, and her cross necklace, just like in the poem. This depiction looks a lot like the popular Breton peasant image. In addition, in the Bobs-Merrill 1905 edition featuring Howard Chandler Christy's artwork, Evangeline looks quite like Darley's drawings although more colourful, as she wears an open-necked white blouse with a dark blue or black long-sleeved bodice laced with red and a red-orange shirt with a white Norman cap.[281]

[280] Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Sir Frank Dicksee, and John Gilbert, *Evangeline* (New York: Grosset, 18--?), 9, fig. 3.3, HathiTrust.
[281] McFarland, *The Long Life of Evangeline*, 99-118.

Figure 3. 4 Darley's Evangeline wears a laced bodice and a Norman cap.[282]

Figure 3. 5 Christy's Evangeline similarly wears a laced bodice and a Norman cap.[283]

Although not a book illustration, one of the most well-known depictions of Evangeline is the Scottish painter Thomas Faed's painting on canvas from the early 1850s. Faed's brother James Faed did an engraving of the painting, which was published in London and New York around 1855 and again in 1863.[284] Despite its popularity, Faed's Evangeline does not wear a

[282] Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and Felix Octavius Carr Darley, *Evangeline* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1884), fig. 3.4, HathiTrust.
[283] Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and Howard Chandler Christy, *Evangeline* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1905), 21, fig. 3.5, Internet Archive.
[284]Johnston, "Imagining Paradise," 112.

Norman cap or a kirtle. Instead, she wears a long gown with full sleeves and a cape as she gazes mournfully into the distance. Although Evangeline does not come off as a peasant, her appeal may be due to her Victorian appearance.

Like Longfellow, the illustrators were not particularly concerned with Gabriel's appearance. Of the few illustrators who did draw Gabriel, his dress is old-fashioned, but not particularly distinct. For instance, in 1853 Gilbert drew him wearing a justaucorps, breeches, and buckled shoes.

In group images, Acadians appear as the Norman and Breton peasants in *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes* with the women wearing skirts, Norman caps, and clogs, and the men looking either dishevelled in breeches and clogs with long hair and wide-brimmed hats or like sophisticated eighteenth-century Frenchmen in the justaucorps and buckled shoes. [285]

Dressing up as Evangeline

Evangeline's character and her imagined identity as a Norman peasant became well-known during the late nineteenth century due to the upper-class Victorians' love of dressing up as historical or literary figures for costumed social events.[286] Queen Victoria and Prince Albert popularized private costumed parties, often called "fancy balls." The tension between the uncertainty over the changing times and the interest in a nation's past and its traditions made dressing up as an historical figure a fashionable choice among guests. For example, in the United States, during the 1876 centennial, there were several fancy dress parties where Americans donned colonial-style garments as figures from their history to celebrate their national identity.

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[285] McFarland, *The Long Life of Evangeline*, 119-136.
[286] Cynthia Cooper and Canadian Museum of Civilization, *Magnificent Entertainments Fancy Dress balls of Canada's Governors General, 1876-1898* (Fredericton, NB: Goose Lane Editions, 1997): xv.

For example, men dressed up as George Washington arrived at balls next to their own Martha Washingtons.[287]

Costumes for popular figures often came to be associated with a specific and well-known outfit. The particular costumes of different figures were popularized because newspapers included lists of the attendees at fancy balls or community events alongside the name of the character they were dressed up as and a description of their costume. Guests could also figure out what their character would wear from paintings, women's magazines, or costume manuals. Ardern Holt's manuals, *Fancy Dresses Described, or, what to wear at fancy balls*, were the primary authority on costumes. Holt's catalogues included descriptions of the costumes for the most popular figures. For women, the contemporary interest in the exotic and the love of pastoralism, made romanticized peasant costumes particularly popular, especially the Normandy peasant dress.[288] As early as 1857, a newspaper article from the *Belfast News-Letter* described a guest "attired as a huge Normandy wet-nurse." The guest wore a similar outfit to Evangeline, including a "Normandy cap, the short woollen petticoat, and long ear-rings, the lace fichu and gold heart and cross…[and] wooden sabots."[289]

Although Victorians sought to make their costumes appear authentic, the costumes were notoriously inaccurate as they tended to resemble contemporary fashions or romanticized images of historical figures and people and places that were deemed exotic.[290] For example, despite her claim of knowing the correct costume for a figure, Holt noted in her introduction that "[n]o one would probably view the national costumes with more curiosity than the peasantry they are

[287] Ibid, 23.
[288] Ibid, 24-28, 34.
[289] "The Carnival Ball," *Belfast News-Letter* 3 March 1857, Newspapers.com.
[290] Cooper, *Magnificent Entertainments,* 25-26.

intended to portray."[291] In the fifth edition of Holt's manual from 1887, Holt described a "Normandy peasant" costume as a,

> short striped skirt; black velvet bodice, [that was laced up the front and] worn over white chemisette with sleeves to elbow; tunic lined with the colour; high cap…A gay coloured cotton kerchief may be tucked into bodice; and a large holland pocket worn; with grey stockings; black shoes; ornaments, gold. In the real Normandy caps there is a great variety.

Holt's "Normandy peasant" looks more like the popular images of Breton peasants, such as in Curmer's volumes, than the common depictions of Norman peasants (see fig. 3.6). Since both Brittany and Normandy were portrayed as romantic regions and both peasant types were painted wearing similar outfits, there appears to have been some crossover and confusion between the two styles. Regardless, Holt's depiction of the Normandy peasant popularized this particular style as the Norman costume. As a well-known Norman peasant herself, Evangeline was used to further illustrate the costume that her fellow Normans would have worn. For example, according to Holt, of the Normandy caps, "[t]wo shapes prevail for Fancy Balls, one such as 'Evangeline' wears, resembling Foundling cap, made in thick muslin, with a high crown, low at the back, a shaped piece fitting the head."[292] However, Holt's catalogue also had a specific "Evangeline costume," which apparently counted as a Norman peasant costume. However, this costume had its own variation as Holt described Evangeline wearing a similar outfit to Longfellow's description in the poem of "a Normandy peasant, with kirtle or petticoat of blue; the tunic, which may match or be of contrasting colours, drawn through the slit at back; large earrings and cross; white Normandy cap; a rosary hanging at the side; the bodice square,

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[291] Ardern Holt, *Fancy Dresses Described; or, What to wear at fancy balls,* 5th edition. (London: Debenham & Freebody, 1887): 1, HathiTrust.
[292] Holt, *Fancy Dresses Described,* 164-165.

with chemisette beneath."[293] The tightly laced bodice in Holt's Normandy peasant costume resembles Darley's 1883 rendition of Evangeline, which suggests that there was a popular image of the Norman dress by the late nineteenth century and that Evangeline was closely associated with the image of the Norman peasant.

Figure 3.6 Holt's Normandy Peasant costume looks like a more extravagant version of the popular illustrations of Breton peasants and of Evangeline.[294]

However, costume manuals did not always represent Evangeline the same way. In another well-known manual, *Weldon's Fancy Dress for Ladies: or suggestions for fancy & calico balls, also fancy bazaars, and private theatricals,* Evangeline's costume was of "a Normandy peasant style… I prefer Evangeline in a plain soft blue-grey gown either merino or veiling, white muslin or cambric apron, collar cuffs, and Normandy cap, the stockings being of grey wool and dainty little buckle leather shoes."[295]

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[293] Ibid, 83.
[294] Ibid, xii, fig. 3.6.
[295] Weldon's Limited, *Weldon's Fancy Dress for Ladies,* Second Series (London: Weldon's, 1888): 98, Internet Archive.

Figure 3.7 Weldon's depiction of Evangeline's Normandy Peasant costume.[296]

This much simpler outfit is very different than the costume described in Holt's manual. In addition, Weldon's Evangeline does not wear a laced bodice and is less colourful and decorated than Holt's Normandy Peasant. However, the milk jug associates Evangeline with the popular image of the Norman Milkmaid. The difference in the costumes suggests that there were some variations in common representations of Evangeline as a Norman peasant.

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the Governor General of Canada hosted four fancy dress balls. In 1896 the Governor General and his wife, the Earl and countess of Aberdeen, held a fancy dress ball in the Senate chamber, in the Parliament building in Ottawa. To foster a sense of Canadian nationalism and pride for the British Empire, they chose the theme of Canadian History for the ball. The 800 guests dressed as historical figures in themed tableaux that each represented a different period from Canada's past. The eighth set "From the Fall of Port Royal to the Second Taking of Louisbourg, including Expatriation of the Acadians, AD 1710-1758," included an Acadian peasant dance called, "The Evangeline dance." The dance featured twenty-two "pretty peasant girls" wearing Holt's Normandy Peasant costume, including laced

[296] Ibid, 99.

bodices, white shirts with the puffy sleeves popular in the late nineteenth century, "short skirts of various colours," "Normandy caps," and cross necklaces. The newspapers further described the Acadians from the dance as having a Norman identity as they listed each of the dancers as "a Normandy peasant of Acadia." Besides the Acadian peasants, the dance included one Evangeline, who wore an outfit that more closely resembled the "Evangeline costume" in Weldon's book, which the *Canadian Home Journal* described as "the daintiest little Evangeline in a little grey gown and golden cross."[297] According to the *Ottawa Daily Citizen*, several other guests showed up as Normandy peasants or "Acadian woman from the days of Evangeline."[298]

Figure 3.8 ***Illustration of the Eighth Historic Group*****. February 1896. Photograph.** ***Illustrations of the Historical Ball*****, 41.**

Evangeline's costume was further publicized after 1913 when the Canadian Bioscope Company produced the first Canadian film, *Evangeline*. Considered to be a success, *Evangeline* was shot in Quebec and Nova Scotia and released in 1914 in Canada and the United States. Popular actors Laura Lyman and John F. Carleton were chosen to play Evangeline and Gabriel.

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[297] Cooper, *Magnificent Entertainments,* xv, 70-72; *Illustrations of the Historical Ball Given by Their Excellencies the Earl and Countess of Aberdeen-Ottawa, 1896,* with Introduction by Sir John Bourinot (Ottawa: Durie, 1896): 40-41, Canadiana; Faith Fenton, "The Ottawa Ball," *Canadian Home Journal* 1, no. 11 (March 1896): 6-7.; "The Historical Ball," *The Ottawa Journal* 18 February 1896, Newspapers.com.

[298] "As in the olden days. Their excellencies' fancy dress ball a great success," *Ottawa Daily Citizen* 18 February 1896, Newspapers.com.

There are no surviving copies available of *Evangeline* today other than a few stills. Laura Lyman's costume of a laced bodice, skirt, and Norman cap is almost identical to the Normandy peasant costume from the Fancy Dress ball.[299] Therefore, by the early twentieth century, popular culture not only viewed Acadians as Norman peasants, but similar costumes that included long skirts, Norman caps, and sometimes laced bodices were associated with Evangeline and her Acadian compatriots and could be easily recognized by the public.

Selling Acadians as Norman Peasants

Although the poem is fictional, Acadians did experience many of the events in *Evangeline* because it was based on an historical event. The fact that the Deportation did happen, that Grand Pré was a real Acadian settlement, that some Acadians did end up in Louisiana, and that Evangeline and Gabriel's story of separation was the true story of countless couples and families caused the poem to have a strong emotional impact on the reader.[300] Further, Longfellow purposely mixed fact with fiction in *Evangeline*, which made the poem seem more like an historical account than just a story. For example, Longfellow based the character of the notary LeBlanc on the real notary LeBlanc, whom Haliburton had described in his account of the history of Nova Scotia.[301] The blending of fact and fiction in *Evangeline* makes it easy for readers to imagine the Acadians as the old-fashioned and simple Norman peasants described in the poem.

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[299] Zoë Constantinides, "The Myth of Evangeline and the Origin of Canadian National Cinema," *Film History* 26, no. 1 (2014): 50-57; LeBlanc, *Postcards from Acadie,* 563.
[300] LeBlanc, *Postcards from Acadie,* 71.
[301] Thomas Chandler Haliburton, *An historical and statistical account of Nova-Scotia: in two volumes,* Vol. 1 (Halifax, NS: J.Howe, 1829): 189, Canadiana; Longfellow, Longfellow, and Scudder, *Evangeline,* 28.

The interest in *Evangeline* attracted travellers to Nova Scotia to see the home of the Acadians from the poem. Ian McKay has called the search for a people living in a romantic premodern past during this period "the quest for the folk."[302] Since Longfellow had created a folk world in *Evangeline,* his Acadians seemed like the premodern Europeans that Americans longed for. For example, while travelling through Nova Scotia in 1892, Jeannette Grant encouraged other Americans to visit the home of the Acadians as she wrote in her travel journal that "[i]f he desire, as did the pilgrim who now writes of her visit to Acadian shrines, to reach the abode of Acadian manners and customs, he can find no pleasanter way than by going direct from Boston to Yarmouth."[303]

During his trip to Nova Scotia in the 1850s, the motifs surrounding the Acadians affected the American traveller Frederic Cozzens' perception of the Acadians he met as he encountered "Acadian peasants," who he believed were a "simple people." Further, he continuously compared the Acadian women to Evangeline by calling them "Evangelines." On his journey to Chezzetcook, Cozzens noted that "now we passed through another French settlement, 'Tracadie,'…the pastoral, black-eyed Evangelines appear." In addition, Cozzens described the Acadians using terminology from the poem. For instance, even though Acadian women did not wear kirtles and Norman caps, when he met a couple on the road to Chezzetcook, he was pleased that the girl "[was] true to tradition. There is nothing modern in the drapery of that figure. She might have stepped out of Normandy a century ago…wearing her Norman cap, and her kirtle of blue."[304]

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[302] McKay, *The Quest of the Folk,* 229.
[303] Grant, *Through Evangeline's Country,* 20-21.
[304]Cozzens, *Acadia,* 39-40, 55-56, 208.

Aware that North Americans considered pre-industrial landscapes to be romantic and pastoral, during the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, companies in Nova Scotia used the influx of tourists to see the home of Evangeline to market Nova Scotia as "The Land of Evangeline," a picturesque and primitive land filled with innocent and traditional folk.[305] Evangeline herself was the ideal Victorian woman living in an old-fashioned pastoral village, the symbol of traditional and better ways, and the perfect marketing tool. With the help of *Evangeline,* Acadians were at the centre of the tourism campaign as they were reimagined as Nova Scotia's "folk."[306] The Windsor and Annapolis Railway Company (the Dominion Atlantic Railway company, or DAR, after 1895) used the story of Evangeline to attract customers by transporting guests to Grand Pré.[307] Further, in 1940, the *Montreal Gazette* advertised Nova Scotia as "romantic" to draw tourists to the province. According to the paper, "[t]he glories of the romantic old province can best be appreciated by travelling via the famed 'Evangeline Route; of the Dominion Atlantic Railway…[as] [t]he story of Evangeline is inseparably linked with the Acadian countryside and the little village of Grand Pre."[308]

As a heroine of French Catholics whom English Protestants had deported, Evangeline put imperialist Nova Scotia in an awkward situation. building tourist sites at Grand Pré promoted some backlash from residents in the Annapolis Valley who feared that developing the site would motivate Acadians to return to the area. More significantly, local historians wanted to make sure that the legitimacy of the British legacy in Nova Scotia was part of the official narrative. Consequently, promoters of the "Land of Evangeline" sought to correct Longfellow's portrayal

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[305] McKay and Bates, *In the Province of History,* 63-65.
[306] McKay, *The Quest of the Folk,* 261-262, 202.
[307] Monica Macdonald, "Railway Tourism in the 'Land of Evangeline,' 1882-1946," *Acadiensis: Journal of the History of the Atlantic Region/Revue d'histoire de la région Atlantique* 35, no. 1 (2005): 158-159.
[308] "Visit to the Land of Evangeline Recalls Early Acadian Culture," *The Gazette,* 8 June 1940, Newspapers.com.

of the Expulsion in *Evangeline*. Guidebooks on the history of the region described Nova Scotia's past in a way that was favourable to the province and its Anglophone residents. Writers explained that the Expulsion of the Acadians had been an unfortunate, but necessary political decision. *Nova Scotia the land of Evangeline and the Tourist's Paradise*, described Grand Pré as a "sadly poetical place…[where] [h]ere will be pointed out to you the site of the ancient Acadian village, where Evangeline and her people dwelt together so happily until their sad but necessary ejection." Some also blamed France and Quebec for manipulating Acadians into not being as neutral as they claimed to be. For example, a local writer, Charles Roberts, claimed that Longfellow had misunderstood the history as the Acadians had always been enemies of the British government.[309]

Technological improvements in photography towards the end of the nineteenth century allowed companies promoting tourism to use photographs to spread the image a company wanted to convey to promote travel to the region. Tourist pamphlets and brochures advertised the "Land of Evangeline" with nostalgic images of scenery that made Nova Scotia appear pastoral.[310] In 1892, the Boston and Yarmouth Steamship Company created "Nova Scotia, the land of Evangeline and the tourist's paradise," which advertised "charming" towns or picturesque and remote landscapes, such as "view from the lookoff," which looks out onto the countryside below on "the wonderfully beautiful island of Cape Breton-the Switzerland of North America." The pamphlet caught the attention of prospective tourists and notified passengers that if they bought a ticket, they would be transported to a romantic premodern getaway.[311]

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[309] LeBlanc, *Postcards from Acadie,* 128; Macdonald, "Railway Tourism," 158-162; Thomas F Anderson and C.B. Webster, *Nova scotia the land of Evangeline and the tourist's paradise* (Boston: Yarmouth Steamship Co., 1892), 22, Canadiana.
[310] LeBlanc, *Postcards from Acadie,* 94-95.
[311] Anderson, *Nova scotia the land of Evangeline and the tourist's paradise,* 19-30.

By at least 1882, companies began including images of Evangeline wearing her Norman peasant costume on tourism brochures to further promote this image. For example, in Charles G.D. Roberts' *The Land of Evangeline and the Gateways Thither*, which the DAR published around 1895, the cover displays an image of Evangeline wearing a kirtle and a Norman cap (see fig. 3.9).[312] Similarly, *The Evangeline Land*, a booklet by a local photographer named Amos Lawson Hardy, includes an image called "A Modern Conception of the Maid Evangeline," showing a woman wearing a Norman cap and kirtle on a countryside road.[313] While the use of Evangeline on the front cover of Robert's brochure caught the attention of tourists right away, the "modern" Evangeline wearing old-fashioned attire in a rural area suggested that tourists would not only be able to visit the home of Evangeline in Nova Scotia, but they would be able to see the real Acadian folk.

Figure 3. 9 An image of Evangeline as a Norman peasant on the title page of *The Land of Evangeline*.

[312] Charles G.D. Roberts, *The Land of Evangeline and the gateways thither* (Kentville, NS: Dominion Atlantic Railway, 1904?), Canadiana.
[313] A.L. Hardy, *The Evangeline land: made famous by the expulsion of the Acadian farmers by the British Government on account of their fidelity to their French King, and afterward immortalized by Longfellow, an American poet* (Kentville, NS: A.L. Hardy), 189?, Canadiana.

Brochures often included descriptions of the current areas where Acadians lived so that tourists could come and see the real people behind the poem. Advertisers tried to make modern Acadians fit the description of the fictional Acadians by depicting them as old-fashioned, exotic, and picturesque in order to attract tourists. Tourist brochures tried to play up the idea that Acadians were still wearing distinctive clothing even though many were no longer dressing in their traditional attire by the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For example, in *Vacation days in Nova Scotia*, by Thomas F. Anderson, which the DAR published in 1908, the section that describes Yarmouth and the French Shore includes a picture of an Acadian woman dressed in the black kerchief and cloak (see fig. 3.10) with the caption, "A descendant of Evangeline's people." The brochure encouraged travel to Clare since,

> [t]hese settlements are well worth a visit by the tourist, not only for the sake of the romance associated with them…but because the people are exceedingly interesting in themselves…[as] [t]he old-fashioned spinning wheel still revolves here, and Nova Scotia homespun is the chief sartorial dependence of the men, while the women retain their quaint black kerchief as a head covering, as in the days of yore.[314]

Figure 3.10 ***A descendant of Evangeline's people*****. Undated Photograph. Dominion Atlantic Railway, "*****Vacation days in Nova Scotia.*****" (Kentville: DAR, 1908), 14.**

[314] Anderson, *Vacation days in Nova Scotia* (Kentville, NS: Dominion Atlantic Railway, 1908), 14-15, Canadiana.

While photos such as this one further marginalized Acadians because it turned them into a tourist attraction, it also demonstrated the perceived link between the Acadians in the poem to the real Acadians.

The marketing of Acadians as a picturesque peasant folk had the desired effect. American tourists came to visit Nova Scotia to see them, expecting them to resemble the characters in the poem. The pilgrims to the Land of Evangeline were fans of Longfellow. They had read *Evangeline* countless times. In Nova Scotia, they searched for Evangeline's real-life descendants and were thrilled when the modern Acadians appeared old-fashioned. Sometimes this led them to play up the image of the modern Acadians to resemble a view that was coloured by their own biases. Even though Acadians did not appear as Norman peasants, tourists often wrote that they did. Ian McKay has described this as the "tourist gaze" because sometimes what a tourist observed was obscured by what he or she had hoped to see.[315] For example, on a trip to Nova Scotia in 1887, the priest Henri-Raymond Casgrain used the term "cape normande, telle que l'a chantée Longfellow"[316] to describe the handkerchief and veil. Casgrain may have assumed that the unusual headgear that Acadian women wore actually was the Norman cap because it appeared to be strange and exotic to him or he may have been playing into the stereotypes of Acadians as timeless Norman peasants.

Further, the tourism industry marginalized Acadians. Even though *Evangeline* was about their history, the railway companies did not focus on aspects of Acadian culture that were part of the poem, such as the French language and the Catholic religion, since they were not selling points for American tourists. In addition, Acadians were left out of the tourist development of the

[315] McKay and Bates, *In the Province of History,* 113.
[316] Casgrain, *Un pélerinage au pays d'Evangéline*, 382.

area. For example, in 1917, George Graham, the new general manager of the DAR bought Grand Pré to turn it into a tourist site to attract more visitors to the Annapolis Valley. To do this, he commissioned the Québec sculptors and Acadian descendants Louis-Philippe and Henri Hébert to create a statue of Evangeline which was unveiled in 1920. Although the sculptors were Acadian descendants, no Acadians were invited to the unveiling of the statue.[317] The statue's outfit further illustrates the romanticized view of the Acadian past as Evangeline is dressed similarly to the romanticized illustrations with no hint of the hardships of the Expulsion.[318]

The popularity of the traditional national folk during the Romantic Movement caused the public to reimagine the Acadian people as the Norman peasants described in Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's popular poem *Evangeline* through the use of the Norman peasant costume. Although there were variations of the Norman peasant costume, it became widely recognized as a marker of the Acadian people. In turn, the Acadians were viewed as old-fashioned peasants living in simpler and better times. The collective interest in a romanticized view of the colonial past during an era of rapid change caused outsiders to regard Acadians as the ideal folk. Illustrations of Evangeline, costumed events, and the tourist industry popularized this view of the Acadians by portraying the popular stereotypes. However, even though the Acadians were left out of the fanfare surrounding Evangeline, they similarly found the story to be a useful tool in representing their identity.

[317] LeBlanc, *Postcards from Acadie,* 84.
[318] Macdonald, "Railway Tourism," 173-174.

Chapter Four: Acadians Embrace *Evangeline*

Acadians took on the image of Evangeline with an Evangeline costume at nation-building events to demonstrate their distinct identity. Although the Acadians had not been included in the reimagining of their past, during the early twentieth century, national leaders took on the popular image of *Evangeline* and reconfigured the story to fit their own agenda. The leaders used *Evangeline* as a tool of nation building to preserve their identity at a time when they were becoming integrated into mainstream North American society. Although the diaspora had created a fragmented community, as most Acadians existed apart in sometimes isolated areas of the Canadian Maritimes and Louisiana, the disparate communities used *Evangeline* as a common point of reference to a shared past to bring Acadians together. Although the Acadians used a fictional account to create a reconfigured history, *Evangeline* became the Acadian founding myth. It empowered leaders to create a unified national community that promoted their culture and told their story in the way that they wanted the past to be remembered and the contemporary community to be viewed by outsiders. This chapter discusses the process of adoption of a specific Evangeline costume in order to illustrate the significance of *Evangeline* to the Acadian community.

Evangeline as an Acadian Founding Myth

Evangeline became popular among Acadians during the 1870s and 1880s after the Acadian Collège Saint-Joseph in Memramcook added the 1870 translation by the Québecois

priest, poet, and author Pamphile LeMay to its curriculum.[319] In addition, literacy was increasing among Acadians and parts of the French version were used in the school textbook *Troisième livre de lecture* in schools in New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Nova Scotia. Further, *Evangeline* was taught in girls' boarding schools as a role model for championing the importance of domestic tasks.[320] Even more significantly, awareness of *Evangeline* became widespread because leaders encouraged Acadians to read the text to promote national consciousness and unity. Since the Expulsion was the central event in the poem, *Evangeline* popularized the unique history of the Acadians which set them apart as a society with a distinct identity. The fact that the poem championed their distinct heritage and culture made it an attractive tool to construct a unified nation at a time when Acadians were attempting to hold on to their identity in the face of assimilation. Further, since *Evangeline* was a well-known and respected poem, its wider popularity legitimized Acadian values in North America when Acadians had fewer rights and opportunities compared to Anglophones.[321]

According to British historical sociologist Anthony Smith, ethnic communities have a sense of a common past which unites members. In order to encourage a sense of belonging among individuals, an ethnic group's history must tell a story that helps make sense of past experiences and defines a distinct identity for the group. In addition, the story must teach the members about the group's history in a way that is favourable and encourages members to feel proud to be part of the community. These stories can be called myths because even though they are often based on some historical truths, they are usually reconfigured to be more desirable, as it is the emotional appeal rather than the historical facts that members identify with. For example,

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[319] Dairon, "Evangeline," 49-51; Griffiths, "Longfellow's 'Evangeline,'" 36, 39.
[320]Rygiel, "'The Homespun economy,'" 175-177; LeBlanc, *Postcards from Acadie,* 56.
[321]Richard, "Le récit de la Déportation comme mythe de création," 73-77 ; LeBlanc, *Postcards from Acadie,* 99-101.

myths of descent explain how the community originated in a specific geographical location to show how all of the members came from the same place even though they may not know each other.[322]

National leaders began to use *Evangeline* as a ready-made myth of descent during the late nineteenth century to claim that before the Deportation, Acadians had lived in the peaceful village of Grand Pré as a harmonious French Catholic community until its barbaric destruction in 1755. However, due to the deported Acadians' relentless endurance to hold on to their cultural identity in the face of persecution, they had persevered and were able to survive as a people.[323] Since *Evangeline* is set during the Deportation and the deported Acadians' survival after exile is what illustrates their strength, the Deportation became the central part of the myth. Leaders could employ the story to remind Acadians of the importance of their French Catholic heritage because their ancestors had suffered to preserve their culture.[324] From the 1880s onwards, Longfellow's story was invoked during national gatherings to create a collective memory and a national consciousness.[325]

National movements also use specific cultural symbols to indicate a group's distinctness, such as national anthems, national flags, or figures to personify "the nation."[326] During the late nineteenth century, Acadian leaders similarly attempted to construct a common identity by creating a set of national symbols. For example, at the first National Convention in 1881, delegates chose the tricolour flag with the star of Mary, a national anthem (Ave Maris Stella), and a national holiday on August 15th.[327] Evangeline similarly became the national heroine.

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[322]Anthony D Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1988), 24-26.
[323] Griffiths, "Longfellow's 'Evangeline,'" 39.
[324] Richard, "Le récit de la Déportation," 73-77.
[325] LeBlanc, *Postcards from Acadie,* 101-102.
[326] Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1-14.
[327] LeBlanc, *Postcards from Acadie,* 104-105.

Nationalists have often used women as cultural symbols during national movements, such as the Statue of Liberty in the United States or Marianne in post-revolutionary France. These female figures symbolize national values, such as liberty and equality, because women's role as the preserver of tradition has made women the symbolic protectors of national values and national cohesion.[328] Therefore, Evangeline's purpose as the national heroine was to safeguard the Acadian culture and promote national unity.

Acadian newspapers helped to spread the *Evangeline* story across the Acadian nation. For example, in 1887 Valentin Landry appropriately chose the name *L'Evangéline* for his newspaper. Landry noted that *L'Evangéline*'s raison d'être was to promote the Acadian cause and he printed lines from the poem on the front page during the first few years of its publication.[329] It is evident that Acadians knew of Evangeline and saw her as an important figure since the name "Evangeline," although unheard of before the publication of the poem, became a popular choice for baby girls during the late nineteenth century.[330] For instance, during his time in Tusquet in 1887, the priest Henri-Raymond Casgrain encountered an Acadian named Frédéric LeBlanc who introduced his niece as "un souvenir vivant de Longfellow: C'est ma nièce, Évangéline Doucet. Elle est fiancée, elle aussi, comme l'héroïne du poète." Further, according to LeBlanc "[l]es Acadiens ont un culte d'admiration et de reconnaissance pour Longfellow, qui a si bien chanté leurs infortunes."[331]

The importance of *Evangeline* to Acadian nation building can be demonstrated by the Acadians use of the tourism symbols in nation-building events. Even though Grand Pré had been

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[328] Bronwyn Winter, "Women as cultural markers/bearers," *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Gender and Sexuality Studies* (Singapore: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2016), 1.
[329] "L'Evangéline," *L'Evangéline* 23 November 1887, Google News Archive.
[330] LeBlanc, *Postcards from Acadie,* 66.
[331]Casgrain, *Un pélerinage au pays d'Evangéline,* 328.

only one of several pre-Expulsion Acadian settlements, its importance in the poem led Acadians to view it as the symbolic ancestral homeland of the Acadian people. Although left out of the official reimagining of their past, the promotion of Grand Pré as a tourist destination helped Acadian nationalists champion the origin myth as the Acadian identity in their nation-building exercises. For example, the Acadian organization Société mutuelle l'Assomption (SMA) assisted in the development of Grand Pré as a tourist site.[332] The creation of the memorial church in 1922 and the addition of a Deportation Cross at the site to remember the Acadians who had been deported from the area enabled Acadians to claim Grand Pré as their own.[333]

It is unclear how the Acadians imagined the dress of their national heroine. During the late nineteenth century when Evangeline became popular, some Acadians were still wearing the distinct outfits described in Chapter Two. However, it is safe to assume that Acadians were familiar with the popular Evangeline visuals depicting the Norman peasant style used in tourism campaigns. LeMay's translation of Evangeline's costume described her wearing a "corset rouge et sa jupe fleurie," and on Sundays an "élégant mantelet [and a] [j]upon bleu, souliers fins, chapeau de Normandie. Et brillants anneaux d'or qu'aux rives d'Acadie."[334] While Lemay included Evangeline's Norman cap in his translation, he left her kirtle out of his description. Instead, Lemay described her dress as a "mantelet," which some Acadians still wore during the 1870s. However, his use of the term "chapeau de Normandie" suggests that Lemay was not correcting Longfellow's anachronism by describing a more historically accurate Acadian outfit. Instead, Lemay's description might be due to the lack of a more precise translation of "kirtle" than "mantelet" and "jupon."

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[332] LeBlanc, *Postcards from Acadie,* 77, 112.
[333] Rudin, *Remembering and Forgetting in Acadie*, 187.
[334] Henry Wadswoth Longfellow and Pamphile Lemay, *Évangéline* (Quebec, 1870), 23, Canadiana. Lemay's 1870 edition of *Évangéline* is not illustrated.

Evangeline similarly became popular among Acadians in Louisiana. Louisianians embraced Longfellow because of Evangeline's travels to Louisiana during her search for Gabriel. However, they put their own spin on *Evangeline* to promote their identity in the United States by giving themselves a closer connection to the story. In 1907 Felix Voorhies, an Acadian judge from Louisiana, wrote *Acadian reminiscences: the true story of Evangeline*, which he claimed was the real story behind *Evangeline.* In *Acadian reminiscences*, a woman named Emmeline Labiche, who was supposedly Voorhies' ancestor, moved to St. Martinville, Louisiana after the Expulsion where she found her lover Louis Arceneaux under an oak tree. Like Evangeline and Gabriel, Emmeline and Louis were separated during the Deportation. However, when Emmeline found out that Louis had married someone else, she died of sadness and was buried in the cemetery next to the church of St. Martinville near the oak tree where she had found him again. Although *Acadian Reminiscences* is a fictional account, it became well known among Acadians in Louisiana because its claim as the true story gave them a direct link to *Evangeline* and the Acadians in Canada while also demonstrating their distinct history in Louisiana. Further, *Acadian Reminiscences* connected Louisiana to the broader cultural representations of Evangeline because the illustration of Emmeline Labiche in Voorhies' book resembles the illustrations of Evangeline in the tourism brochures of Nova Scotia discussed in the previous chapter. [335]

The Louisiana Acadians similarly took on the image of Evangeline to promote their culture and heritage. During the late nineteenth century, elite Acadians worried that they were losing their traditional culture due to assimilation into American society. Elites emphasized

[335] Felix Voorhies, *Acadian reminiscences: the true story of Evangeline* (New Orleans, LA: Rivas: 1907), 80; Rita Ross, "Evangeline, Acadians, and Tourism Imaginaries," In *Tourism Imaginaries at the Disciplinary Crossroads: Place, Practice, Media,* Nelson Graburn and Maria Gravari-Barbas (Brookfield: Taylor and Francis, 2016), 103-104.

Evangeline's traditional life to promote older ways in early twentieth-century Louisiana. Similar to the tourism campaign in Nova Scotia, Louisianan Acadians created tourist sites that portrayed a romanticized view of their past based on Longfellow's poem. The tourist sites demonstrated that Acadians in Louisiana had a distinct culture and heritage, but that they were united by a tragic history with the centre of Acadian life at Bayou Teche "la nouvelle Acadie."[336] For example, in 1914, members of the Lafayette Forum created the Acadian Pageant Company to show off Louisiana as a picturesque southern "Land of Evangeline." They created a pageant that told the story of how the British had destroyed Evangeline and her compatriots' simple village life and peaceful existence in Nova Scotia, which had led them to rebuild their communities in Louisiana. The producers hoped that this public demonstration of their history would foster a feeling of unity among Acadians and teach outsiders this version of their heritage.[337]

The enthusiasm for Evangeline in Louisiana included the well-established Norman costume. One of the main advocates of *Evangeline* tourism in Louisiana was Susan Evangeline Anding Walker. Although not Acadian, Anding Walker wanted to promote Acadian cultural identity through the creation of a national monument of Evangeline in St. Martinville. Anding Walker took advantage of a trend in the United States during the 1920s of hosting historic costumed pageants to market towns as tourist attractions by including girls dressed up as Evangeline at tourism campaigns. In 1924, as a member of the Opelousas Civic League, Anding Walker was responsible for organizing the agriculture float for the parade at the third annual Cotton Carnival in Opelousas. She chose *Evangeline* as the theme for the float and had riders

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[336] Brundage, "Le Réveil de la Louisiane, 271-298.

[337] Fitzhugh W. Brundage, "Memory and Acadian Identity, 1920-1960: Susan Evangeline Walker Anding, Dudley LeBlanc, and Louise Olivier, or the Pursuit of Authenticity," In *Acadians and Cajuns: The Politics and Culture of French Minorities in North America,* Ursula Mathis-Moser, and Günter Bischof (Innsbruck, Austria: Innsbruck University Press, 2009), 58. Sources do not reveal which costumes were chosen for the pageant.

dress up as Normandy peasants in laced bodices on top of a white shirt, skirts, and high hats. The costume that Anding Walker chose was very similar to the costume that the Acadian Normandy peasants had worn at the Fancy Ball almost thirty years earlier, except that the shirts in the float rider's costume did not have puffy sleeves as the Victorian trend for voluminous clothing had not continued into the twentieth century. Further, in 1926 she used a lifelike mannequin dressed as Evangeline at the Philadelphia Sesquicentennial Exposition. It was so popular that it was moved to the window of a New York City department store.

Anding Walker's success motivated her to start bringing girls (who were not necessarily Acadian) dressed up in costume to attract attention to Acadian culture at marketing campaigns. In 1928 she brought a group of girls wearing Norman caps and laced black bodices over blue dresses to the Republican and Democratic national conventions. They caught the attention of onlookers wherever they went.[338] These real-life "Evangelines" had the same purpose as the images of Evangeline on tourism brochures in Nova Scotia, as their costume not only associated them with the popular figure Evangeline, but it connected Louisiana with the poem, thereby promoting the state to onlookers as a romantic and picturesque travel destination. For example, a 1928 article in the *Teche News* said Anding Walker's use of "[s]even of the Evangeline girls" at a publicity event in New Orleans "for the purpose of advertising Louisiana history, romance and products to the rest of the United States…[t]he aim of Mrs. Anding…is to 'sell' Louisiana to the other states by means of personal trips by the 'Evangeline girls.'"[339]

The "Evangeline girls" sold Louisiana by distributing tourist literature and telling guests the history of Evangeline country in Louisiana from their convention booth, which also featured

[338] Gordon, "Costumed Representations of Early America," 13; Brundage, "Memory and Acadian Identity," 55-60; Hartley, Carola Lillie, "Mrs. Anding and her Evangeline Girls," *Daily World* 6 August 2017, Newspapers.com.
[339] "Mrs. Anding sees Frugee Bill pass," *Teche News* 14 July 1928, Newspapers.com.

an old Acadian spinning wheel to remind guests of the Acadians' quaint and traditional past.[340] A year later, Anding Walker reused this tactic to bring four new "Evangeline girls" to meet President Hoover and his wife at the White House. The Evangelines' costume of dark-coloured lace bodices with long sleeves, long skirts, and high hats was similar to the costume used at the cotton carnival, but with the addition of fashionable heels (see Fig. 4.1).[341]

The use of a costume that the public could easily recognize as a Norman peasant costume with added contemporary touches, such as heels, allowed the Evangeline girls to present onlookers with a reimaged and idealized version of the past. The costume was more appealing to twentieth-century sensibilities than the more conservative dress that Acadian women wore in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries would have been. The attempt to invent national historic costumes was not unique. For example, in Bavaria during the 1930s, Bavarians similarly romanticized the national dress for women at events celebrating Bavarian culture and history to make it more attractive. The closed-collared and long-sleeved dirndl that women wore in earlier periods was reimagined as a laced corset and short-sleeve blouse as this version was seen as more appealing during the twentieth century than the original.[342]

The marketing campaign was a success as the Evangeline girls were paraded around Washington where "they were the center of attraction in quaint Acadian costumes."[343] The publicity that Anding Walker received from the "Evangeline girls" tactic led to a reimagining of the landscape in Acadian areas of Louisiana. In 1927 the Chambers of Commerce created a

[340] Brundage, "Le Réveil de la Louisiane," 271-298.
[341] "Four Evangeline Girls back home from inaugural," *Clarion-News* 14 March 1929, Newspapers.com.
[342] Brooks and Mehler, "The Historical Archaeology of Nationalism in Scotland and Bavaria," 22-24.
[343] "Four Evangeline Girls back home from inaugural," *Clarion-News* 14 March 1929, Newspapers.com.

Southern "Evangeline land" in five counties with Acadian populations. In addition, in the 1930s a park commemorating Evangeline for tourists was created in St. Martinville.[344]

Figure 4.1 Mrs. Hoover Greets "Evangeline Girls." March 13, 1929. Photograph. *The Ottawa Citizen,* 14. Accessed 27 June 2021, Newspapers.com.

Promoting National Unity Through a Distinct Identity

An Acadian and a member of Louisiana's state legislature, Dudley J. LeBlanc, built on Anding Walker's use of the "Evangeline girls" for tourism stunts to promote Acadian heritage in Louisiana. LeBlanc founded the Association of Louisiana Acadians for descendants of Acadian exiles to get other Acadians in Louisiana involved in his activism. Through his work, LeBlanc forged ties with Canadian Acadian activists as well.[345] In 1930, with the help of the "Evangeline girls," LeBlanc organized the first reunification between Acadians in Louisiana and Acadians in Canada through a two-week trip to Canada to participate in the commemoration of the 175th anniversary of the Deportation at Grand Pré. The delegation included twenty-five Acadian

[344] Brundage, "Memory and Acadian Identity," 60-62.
[345] Ibid, 60-62.

"Evangeline girls," wearing laced bodices, long skirts, and Norman caps from different Acadian towns "to have a girl representing Evangeline from every Acadian community in Louisiana."[346]

Historical pageantry to commemorate the past was a popular practice in England and North America during the first quarter of the twentieth century. A city or town acted out perceived important events from the past by wearing costumes to remind the audience of the community's shared roots and to promote social and political change for the future.[347] Wearing costumes to depict national heroines was similarly common in early twentieth-century commemorations in Canada. For example, in 1904 commemorations for the founding of Port Royal were staged in the Maritimes and included a re-enactment of the landing of a costumed Champlain.[348] Similarly, in 1908 a pageant to commemorate Quebec's tercentenary included men and women dressed as colonial figures.[349]

Although no Acadians had been invited to the 1904 celebrations at Port Royal, and Acadians had not publicly marked the Centennial of the Deportation in 1855, the growing nationalism, partially due to the use of *Evangeline,* motivated Acadians to stage their own public commemoration of the 175th anniversary of the Deportation in 1930.[350] As the centre of the myth of descent, leaders believed the Deportation was a significant event to the community. Fittingly, Longfellow's version of their past took centre stage at the celebrations as one newspaper reported that "[h]undreds of pilgrims of Acadian descent came from all over the continent to

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[346] "To celebrate at Grand Pre," *Nanaimo Daily News* 9 August 1930, Newspapers.com; "Association of Louisiana Acadians organized," *Abbeville Meridional* 28 June 1930, Newspapers.com.
[347] H.V. Nelles, *The Art of Nation-Building: Pageantry and Spectacle at Québec's Tercentenary* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2011): 143-144.
[348] Rudin, *Remembering and Forgetting,* 38.
[349] Nelles, *The Art of Nation-Building*, 182-193.
[350] Rudin, *Remembering and Forgetting*, 47, 183.

celebrate the 175th anniversary of their expulsion from Acadia, at Grand Pré in front of Hébert's statue of Evangeline." [351]

Everywhere that the Acadian delegation went the public identified them with Evangeline. Their cars announced their arrival with banners that said "Acadians of Evangeline Country," and newspapers all over Canada reported the arrival of the group of young women wearing "Evangeline costumes."[352] The *Ottawa Citizen* reported that

> clad in the Norman caps and kirtles, the styles of their forebears in Acadia, twenty-five pretty young women from the Evangeline country of southwest Louisiana were en route today in two special cars on a pilgrimage to Nova Scotia to participate at Grand Pré in ceremonies commemorating the 175th anniversary of the deportation of their ancestors from Acadia.[353]

Similarly, *L'Evangéline* noted that 5,000 people had arrived for the ceremony in Grand Pré, including "des gens venus de l'Indiana, de la Nouvelle-Angleterre et de tous les coins des provinces maritimes." However, it was the "vingt-cinq jeunes filles qui porteront toutes pendant la durée du voyage le pittoresque costume d'Evangéline," who were "l'objet de la plus chaleureuse bienvenue." The reporters called the trip "le miracle acadien," and gushed that "au cours de la cérémonie du 175ème anniversaire de la Déportation des Acadiens qui a été célébré ici avec un éclat et un enthousiasme, rendus plus vifs encore par la présence d'une pittoresque délégation de la Louisiane dont 25 jeunes filles en costume d'Evangéline."[354] The Evangeline girls were so popular that about 3,000 Acadians showed up at the train station in Moncton in the middle of the day at the end of the trip to see them off.[355]

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[351] "Picturesque Ceremony Takes Place at Grand Pre, N.S," *The Ottawa Citizen* 23 August 1930, Newspapers.com.
[352] Brundage, "Le Réveil de la Louisiane," 271-298; "To Celebrate at Grand Pre."
[353] "Start Pilgrimage To Grand Pre, N.S," *The Ottawa Citizen* 15 August 1930, Newspapers.com.
[354] "Le miracle acadien attesté par la démonstration de Grand Pré," *L'Evangéline* 21 August 1930, Google News Archive.
[355] Rudin, *Remembering and Forgetting,* 192.

During the pilgrimage, LeBlanc stated that there were many things to be recalled during the reunification with Acadians in Canada such as common customs.[356] Even though by the 175th anniversary Acadians had been a diasporic community longer than Acadia had existed before the Deportation, the decision to bring the "Evangeline girls" dressed in costumes that were supposed to represent Acadians when they had been one community before the Deportation strengthened the perceived ties between the two groups.

In April 1931, Dudley LeBlanc organized a trip to bring Canadian Acadians to visit the major Acadian communities in Louisiana.[357] The newspapers *L'Evangéline* and *Le Devoir* arranged the trip. The editors claimed that it was a significant moment in the reunification of French Catholics in the North and the South. Unsurprisingly, Evangeline was an important part of their reunion as the main event would be the unveiling of the new Evangeline statue at St. Martinville.[358] In addition, the trip included stopping to see the house Longfellow had lived in on their way south as "[i]l convient que les Acadiens, en route pour voir leurs frères du sud aillent render leurs humbles et reconnaissants hommages à la mémoire de l'illustre poète qui a mis Evangéline sur son piédestal."[359]

LeBlanc's decision to escort "Evangeline girls" to represent the Acadians at the events of the previous year had impressed the Canadian organizers so much that they decided to imitate the idea for their own trip.[360] *L'Evangéline* reported that the trip would include "vingt-cinq jeunes Acadiennes qui s'en vont là-bas sous le traditionnel costume d'Evangéline; rendre la

[356] Brundage, "Le Réveil de la Louisiane," 271-298.
[357] Ibid, 271-298.
[358] "Du Canada à la Louisiane," *L'Evangéline* 7 May 1931, Google News Archive.
[359] "Notre voyage en Louisiane." *L'Evangéline* 5 February 1931, Google News Archive.
[360] Clément Cormier, "Tournée triomphale en Louisiane: Octobre 1946," *Les Cahiers de la Société Historique Acadienne* 17, no. 4 (1986):133.

visite des Evangélines louisianaises."[361] However, the organizers were unsure which "traditionnel" costume would be the most appropriate for their own Evangeline girls. In the January 29th edition of *L'Evangéline*, the editor wondered, "[q]uel costume porteront les Evangélines qui participeront au voyage? Sera-ce exactement celui des Evangélines louisianaises?" The choice of costume was significant enough that "c'est la question qu'étudie actuellement un comité spécial chargé de reconsituer dans la mesure du possible de véritable costume de notre héroïne nationale," as several options had been suggested.[362] Apparently, the most important part was that the costume was historically accurate, which, according to the committee, meant that the costume would be attractive. For example, the editor noted that "ce qui est certain [illegible]- dit une des dames du comité c'est que ce costume pour être conforme à la vérité historique devra être joli. Car nos Acadiennes de Grand Pré, en bonnes petites françaises qu'elles étaient avaient du gout."[363]

The confusion over the most appropriate costume for Evangeline suggests a disconnect with the more recent historical past. Even though the topic of traditional Acadian dress as an aspect of group identity had been the subject of heated debates during the late nineteenth century, since Evangeline was what set Acadians apart, the community used her dress to portray a distinct group identity. However, the committee chose a costume that was different than both LeMay's description and the costume of the Evangeline girls. On February 5, 1931, the newspaper reported that the committee had decided on a costume. The article included an image of "une des Evangélines qui fera le voyage de la Louisiane au mois d'avril prochain. Le costume que porte

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[361] "Du Canada à la Louisiane."

[362] "On profitera de notre passage à Saint-Martinville pour inaugurer un monument," *L'Evangéline* 29 January 1931, Google News Archive.

[363] "On profitera de notre passage à Saint-Martinville pour inaugurer un monument." *L'Evangéline* did not provide any further details about the committee that was responsible for choosing the costume and no additional information has been found.

Mlle Thibodeau est celui qui a été adopté. Il est complètement bleu à l'exception de la coiffe, du mouchoir et des manchettes qui sont blancs" (see Fig. 4.2).[364] The white fichu and the elbow-length unlaced bodice with puffy sleeves more closely resembled the popular images of Evangeline used on tourism brochures, such as the illustration on the cover of Roberts' *The Land of Evangeline* (see Fig. 3.8), than the costume that the Evangeline Girls from Louisiana wore. On the other hand, the outfit that the committee chose was similar to the costume that the actress Delores Del Rio wore in the successful 1929 Edwin Carewe production of *Evangeline* (see Figures 4.3 and 4.4). Further, since Carewe's *Evangeline* was shot in St. Martinville, and Del Rio had agreed to be the model for the Evangeline statue that was to be unveiled during the 1931 pilgrimage, the Acadians may have thought that Del Rio's dress was a more suitable costume for them to adopt.[365]

Figure 4.2 Reid Studio, Moncton, Une de nos Evangélines. February 5, 1931. Photograph. *L'Evangéline,* 15. Accessed 27 June 2021, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=UY3hNwcQ290C&dat=19310205&printsec=frontpage&hl=en.

[364] "Une de nos Evangélines." *L'Evangéline* 5 February 1931, 15, Google News Archive.
[365] Dairon, "Evangeline," 47; LeBlanc, *Postcards from Acadie,* 63.

Figure 4. 3 Photograph of Delores Del Rio as Evangeline in Edwin Carewe's 1929 production of Evangeline. *The Edwin Carewe Legacy Archive.* Accessed 27 June 2021, https://edwincarewe.com/gallery/#evangeline.

Figure 4. 4 Still image from Edwin Carewe's 1929 production of *Evangeline. The Edwin Carewe Legacy Archive.* Accessed 27 June 2021, https://edwincarewe.com/gallery/#evangeline.

The media participated in playing up the connection between Evangeline and the Acadians, calling the Canadian Evangelines "descendants of the Acadians of Longfellow's 'Evangeline" as if Longfellow's poem was what had made them Acadian. Similarly, the media used the terminology from the poem to describe the Evangeline outfits, as one article noted that "in their traveling bags the girls had packed caps and kirtles of the type worn by the Acadian women of another day."[366] This was fitting, though, because in Louisiana the visitors were

[366] "Girl Descendants of Acadians on Way to Louisiana," *The Shreveport Journal* 13 April 1931, Newspapers.com.

surrounded by images of Evangeline and were brought to all of the tourist sites that were associated with her while Acadian girls and boys dressed as Evangeline and Gabriel greeted them.[367]

The Canadian delegation also included two Gabriels, although the newspaper did not have the same debate over the Gabriel costume.[368] In fact, the newspaper did not mention his costume at all. This is perhaps not surprising since Gabriel was not the national heroine and Longfellow had not described Gabriel's outfit. Further, since only a few of the illustrators had attempted to interpret his clothing, there was no way for the public to recognize Gabriel's character unless he was with someone dressed as Evangeline. The Gabriels may have looked like the fancy Frenchman wearing the justaucorps in the Carewe production or like the image of the colonial American pioneer figure that had become popular by this time.

Although the two Evangeline costumes were different, they allowed the Acadians from Louisiana to feel united with the Acadians from Canada. In a parade in Breaux Bridge during the trip, the *Lafeyette Daily Advertiser* noted that "the visiting Acadian young women and young men of this city, in their Evangeline and Gabriel dress, [were] typifying the spirit of unity, friendship and understanding between the Acadians of Louisiana and Canada."[369] In other words, the costume unified them because they both represented their national heroine. Evangeline gave them a figure who could represent all Acadians and her costume. Despite its variations, the costume could be used to demonstrate their unity and allow Acadians to be easily identifiable as part of the group to each other and to outsiders. Further, even though by the 1930s the Acadians

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[367] Brundage, "Memory and Acadian Identity," 62.
[368] LeBlanc, *Postcards from Acadie,* 66.
[369] "Breaux Bridge Gives Great Welcome To Acadians, With Parade, Supper, As Features," *The Daily Advertiser* 20 April 1931, Newspapers.com.

no longer dressed in distinct clothing, since Evangeline was a symbol of the Acadian people, by dressing as her, Acadians performed their distinct identity.

Again in 1936, a delegation from Louisiana, headed by Dudley LeBlanc and including 57 Acadian "Evangeline girls," travelled to Grand Pré on a "good will tour" during the Acadian Day celebrations "in demure white organdy caps, billowing blue skirts and tightly-laced black bodices... [to retrace] the path followed in sorrow by their forefathers from Nova Scotia. These modern 'Evangelines' will carry a message of good-will and friendship from the Acadian land of south Louisiana to their northern cousins."[370]

According to the historian Caroline-Isabelle Caron, the Evangeline costume was crystallized with the 1929 movie *Evangeline* starring Delores Del Rio.[371] However, the Canadian Acadians altered their version of the Evangeline outfit for their 1946 pilgrimage to Louisiana to match the costume that the Evangeline girls in Louisiana wore. Instead of the blue dress and fichu from 1931, in 1946 the Canadian Evangelines toured Louisiana in laced bodices, and long skirts with the Norman cap (see fig. 4.5).[372] It is unclear why the 1946 delegation decided to change their outfits; however, the Louisianian costume seems to have begun to replace earlier depictions of Evangeline's dress in popular culture. For example, a tourism advertisement in a 1941 edition of *The Gazette* included an illustration of Evangeline dressed in the same outfit as the Louisianian Evangeline girls.[373] Perhaps the popularity of the Louisiana delegations in 1930 and 1936 had established this version of the costume as Evangeline's true costume. On the other hand, the use of the same costume suggests the attempt to unify the Acadian nation. Since the Evangeline costume was symbolic of the national myth, when Acadians put the costume on, they

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[370] "57 Acadians Depart for Nova Scotia," *The Times* 13 August 1936, Newspapers.com.
[371] Caron, "Se souvenir de l'Acadie d'antan," 69.
[372] "Acadians to Visit Marksville October 24," *The Weekly News* October 19 1946, Newspapers.com.
[373] "The Land of Evangeline" is in Nova Scotia," *The Gazette* May 31, 1941, Newspapers.com.

took on the image of the Norman peasants in the poem as their own identity and by wearing the same version of the costume, they demonstrated that it was a shared identity.

Figure 4. 5 Acadians to Visit Marksville October 24th. October 19, 1946. Photograph. *The Weekly News* (Marksville, Louisiana), 1. Newspapers.com.

The Evangeline Costume Becomes the National Costume

Acadian nation building using *Evangeline* led to a feeling of unity and national consciousness between the dispersed communities in Canada and the United States. While the Evangeline myth empowered leaders by providing them with an appealing narrative to promote their values to foster nationalist sentiment, the "Evangeline girls" enabled the Acadians to claim their own version of their past. This was the case during the largest public event put on by Acadians, the 1955 Bicentennial of the Deportation. The Bicentennial was a year-long event in both Canada's Maritime region and Louisiana. In Canada, it included national and local events throughout the Maritimes, such as pageants, balls, and parades.

To showcase the chosen Acadian identity, the Evangeline costume was used conspicuously throughout the ceremonies. According to *L'Evangéline*, "pour que les manifestations se déroulent dans une atmosphère complètement acadienne," it was important that

the "dames et demoiselles portant toutes le costume acadien durant les fêtes. Il est de mise sur la rue, à l'église, aux concerts, sur le parcours de la parade, partout…[because] le costume d'Evangéline sera à l'honneur en tout et tout lieu."[374] In other words, the Evangeline costume had become the Acadian costume. While Acadians no longer dressed in a distinct Acadian style, they used the Evangeline costume in place of the kerchief and striped petticoat as a marker of a distinct Acadian identity because without the Evangeline costume, the "manifestations" would not create an "atmosphère complètement acadienne." Further, in the same way that the community had pressured women to wear the Acadian dress in the late nineteenth century to preserve the group identity, community leaders persuaded women to dress in a manner that represented the unique identity of the Acadian people in order to preserve the culture.

During the national events of the Bicentennial "les costumes d'Evangéline" were worn during a parade in Moncton and at a banquet at St. Anselme, New Brunswick.[375] Further, "Evangélines" participating in the Moncton festival de folklore put on a pageant to act out the Deportation and a folk dance next to the Acadian flag. They not only wore their costume on stage, but the "gentil[e]s Evangélines portent le costume…sur la rue, ce qui charme les visiteurs."[376] The Evangeline costume was similarly used in regional events that were part of the bicentenary, but were organized by local leaders rather than those put on by the central organizing committee. For example, in 1955 women and men dressed up as Evangeline and Gabriel for events commemorating the Deportation in Clare, Isle Madame, Pubnico, and Yarmouth throughout the year. Similarly, the most common themes for floats on the Deportation

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[374] "Le costume d'Evangéline sera porté partout," *L'Evangéline* 5 August 1955, Google News Archive.
[375] "Fête Acadienne," *L'Evangéline* 2 May 1955, Google News Archive; "La Soirée de St-Anselme," *L'Evangéline* 4 June 1955, Google News Archive.
[376] "L'on y danse tout en rond," *L'Evangéline* 11 August 1955, Google News Archive ; "Le Pageant commence ce soir," *L'Evangéline* 8 August 1955, Google News Archive.

in parades depicted scenes from *Evangeline* with locals dressed as Evangeline and Gabriel. In addition, for the parades at Pubnico, Arichat, and Isle Madame, women and girls showed up dressed as Evangeline, while one boy came as Gabriel.

In fact, locals even rejected other costumes in favour of the Evangeline costume. In the months leading up to the events, the organizing committee gave Mary Harney, a local non-Acadian from Clare, the task of coming up with more historically accurate costumes for participants to wear to the parade and ball instead of those representing Evangeline and Gabriel. Harney came up with costumes that she believed were historically accurate because they were supposedly traditional to the regions of France where the community believed that the ancestors of many of the locals had originated. However, most of the women decided to ignore Harney's suggestions and wore the Evangeline costume instead. While women rejected Harney's costume choices, men did not refuse to wear the outfit she had proposed for them. For the men's costume, Harney had chosen white shirts, a black waistcoat, blue trousers, and a red belt. The men's costume was very simple, as there was nothing distinctive about it other than its old-fashioned look.[377] This further demonstrates the greater importance given to the Evangeline costume than to Gabriel's clothing. Since there was not one specific Gabriel costume, the men could wear this form of dress and onlookers would still interpret them as Gabriel because of their old-fashioned-looking outfits in the presence of women dressed as Evangeline.

Nathalie Hamel studied a similar phenomenon in Quebec during the first half of the twentieth century. The government of Québec wanted to preserve the values that it saw as vital to French Canadian identity—faith, family, the French language, and rural life—by creating regional costumes. However, the outfits more closely fit contemporary fashions rather than

[377] Caron, "Se souvenir de l'Acadie d'antan," 66-70.

historically accurate outfits. Hamel found that the idealized version of the costume is a more effective way of capturing how the society wants to be identified, as costumes become symbols of a society's chosen identity, not of its past.[378] Therefore, since Evangeline was symbolic of the community's chosen origin myth, Evangeline's costume was the preferable option to communicate the Acadians' chosen identity.

In Louisiana, the Bicentennial was similarly the largest demonstration of ethnic pride. It lasted the entire year throughout the state to celebrate Acadian culture through *Evangeline*.[379] Organizers selected an official "Evangeline," Emelie Evelyn Breaux, to promote the Bicentennial. As "Louisiana's modern-day Evangeline," Breaux visited the major cities of Louisiana to tell residents about their mythical history and culture and attended commemorative events throughout the state because as the "queen of Acadian Louisiana she [was] much in demand."[380] Further, in August, Breaux led a 160-member delegation on a third pilgrimage to Canada for the celebrations. Of course, the official Evangeline wore a laced bodice, a long skirt, and a high hat to all the events that she attended. [381]

[378] Hamel, "Coordonner l'artisanat et le tourisme," 97-114.
[379] Brundage, "Le Réveil de la Louisiane," 271-298.
[380] "Emelie Evelyn Breaux The Modern Evangeline," *Teche News* 4 November 1955, Newspapers.com.
[381] "Evangéline Revient en Acadie," *L'Evangéline* 10 August 1955, Newspapers.com.

Figure 4. 6 The Evangeline Pageant A Year in Preparation. November 4, 1955. Photograph. *Teche News* (St. Martinville, Louisiana), 32. Newspapers.com.

Even though the Acadians of Louisiana used Longfellow's poem to define their narrative, like the Acadians in Nova Scotia, they claimed the narrative for themselves by adding their own flavour. In September 1955, as part of the bicentenary, they created a "dramatic blending of history and romance," by performing Evangeline's reunion with Gabriel based on the Voorhies story with a "symbolic landing beneath the Evangeline Oak on the banks of the quiet bayou."[382] By including the Voorhies story in their celebrations, they claimed themselves as a distinct Louisianian community within the Acadian community. In addition, at the end of the year, a pageant with a cast of over one hundred depicted the tragic life of Evangeline.[383] The pageant included "[l]es Evangelines et les Gabriels" with the "Evangelines" wearing the Evangeline costume and the "Gabriels" wearing old-fashioned waistcoats and breeches. The pageant traced the "migration" of one family from Nova Scotia to Louisiana and was meant to be "a real tribute to the Acadian people, to their sufferings and trials through the Expulsion and travelling from their original home to their new land, and to their eventual triumph in building a new and good

[382] "Dramatic Bleding Of History-Romance To Mark Acadian Bicentennial Event," *Teche News* 30 September 1955, Newspapers.com.
[383] Brundage, "Le Réveil de la Louisiane," 271-298.

life." Moreover, the rhetoric was similar to the narratives that Acadians in Canada used as it played on the idea of a triumphant survival after expulsion by celebrating the creation of a rebuilt community.[384]

The use of the Evangeline costume to symbolize the Acadian identity demonstrates Eric Hobsbawm's notion of the "invented tradition." According to Hobsbawm, invented traditions are "a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past." By repeatedly invoking these symbolic practices at community-building events, the community attempts to pass off the invented tradition as a practice from time immemorial. Therefore, the contemporary practices of the group appear to be unchanged from the group's "suitable" or mythical historic past in order to avoid any change to the community's values. Since group members understand the values an invented tradition symbolizes, the community invokes the past to legitimize the importance of the tradition to group identity and to promote unity among the imagined community because the invocation of the invented tradition allows members to feel as though they are part of the group.[385]

The Evangeline costume demonstrates that Acadians have remembered their past in a way that is inconsistent with the historical record not only because the costume does not reflect the dress of the eighteenth-century Acadians, but because it symbolized a reimagined and mythical version of Acadian society. However, it was useful to the community because it demonstrated that the Acadian people had a distinct culture. Commemorations reveal a society's beliefs about itself and what it wants the community to be. By projecting current beliefs and

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[384] "The Evangeline Pageant a year in preparation," *Teche News* 4 November 1955, Newspapers.com.
[385] Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1-14.

values onto the past, the community defines itself the way that it wants others to see it.[386] Since Evangeline embodied the values of the poem, she was symbolic of the Acadian people. Therefore, her costume demonstrated that the Acadians were a noble people who had a heroic past and by wearing this costume Acadians represented those same values. The costume revealed the centrality of the Deportation in the collective memory, which also promoted unity of the group because it reminded the members that they had the same shared past. Consequently, the wearer was able to clearly identity herself as an Acadian with a distinct ethnic identity and as a part of the official group narrative of the past.[387]

[386] Nelles, *The Art of Nation-Building,* 169.
[387] Caron, "Se souvenir de l'Acadie d'antan," 66-71.

Conclusion

Despite the fanfare surrounding costumed Evangelines during the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, like all trends, Evangeline's costume soon went out of style. *Evangeline's* influence began to fade in the tourist industry during the 1950s. The Dominion Atlantic Railway slowly phased out the Evangeline logo and in 1956 agreed to sell the Grand Pré site to the federal government.[388]

During the period following the Bicentennial, the Evangeline myth similarly lost its power among Acadians. In Acadian communities, the 1960s and the 1970s were a period of modernization, economic, social, and ideological change as they became more involved in the public space. However, Acadians were still discriminated against in the Maritimes because of their language and religion. Some Acadians were influenced by Francophones in Quebec who fought for political and linguistic acknowledgement in Canada during the 1960s and wanted to similarly claim political recognition for Acadians. This led to a new generation who denounced the established national symbols. During what some scholars have called the "Second Acadian Renaissance," Acadians began to challenge their grandparents romanticized view of the past and *Evangeline*'s role in it. The younger generations increasingly viewed Longfellow's poem as what some scholars called "Evangelinism," an appeal to an idealized past.[389] Further, they increasingly saw Evangeline as a symbol of what was outdated in society because she had accepted her fate during the Expulsion rather than resisting the British. Instead, Acadians searched for representations of their past that were considered to be more authentic and more closely aligned with their current values. Although the Evangeline costume has persisted in

[388] Macdonald, "Railway Tourism," 179; LeBlanc, *Postcards from Acadie*, 149-150.
[389] Dairon, "Evangeline," 59-63; LeBlanc, *Postcards from Acadie*, 143-144; Ross, "Evangeline, Acadians, and Tourism Imaginaries," 104-105.

Acadian demonstrations of identity to this day, with the emergence of other cultural reference points, Evangeline has lost her monopoly on the collective memory.

One of the most prominent figures who attempted to shift the national narrative during the late twentieth century is the Acadian writer Antonine Maillet. Maillet has written plays and novels to redefine Acadia in a way that rejected Longfellow's work. Through her writing, Maillet created strong female characters who, unlike Evangeline, were not passive when faced with adversity. For example, in 1971 Maillet published the play *La Sagouine*, which was about an elderly twentieth-century Acadian cleaning lady from New Brunswick who discusses her difficult life in poverty in several monologues. In contrast to Evangeline, nothing about La Sagouine's life is romantic and ideal as she is old and only wears worn-out clothing. Further, while Evangeline's old-fashioned outfit contributed to her romantic qualities, La Sagouine's dress is dirty and outdated because she receives all of her clothing as hand-me-downs from the woman for whom she scrubs the floors.[390] *La Sagouine*'s popularity led to the creation of a new national heroine, this time one written by an Acadian. In addition, in 1992, a theme park *Pays de la Sagouine* opened in Bouctouche, New Brunswick, and included actors dressed as characters from the play to interact with visitors. The *Pays de la Sagouine* gave Acadians a new place of cultural memory that demonstrated the current values the way that Grand Pré and Saint-Martinville had decades earlier.[391]

[390] Dairon, "Evangeline," 59-63; Antonine Maillet, *La Sagouine* (Montreal, QC: Leméac, 1990), 15.
[391] Mélanie LeBlanc and Annette Boudreau, "Discourses, Legitimization, and the Construction of Acadianité," *Signs and society* 4 no. 1 (2016): 94-98.

Figure 5.1 Viola Léger as La Sagouine. Undated photograph. *La Sagouine. Le Pays de la Sagouine.* Accessed 26 June 2021, https://sagouine.com/en/live-the-experience/la-sagouine.

Acadians are not finished dressing up the past. Another cultural site which has demonstrated the shift away from Evangeline is Le Village Historique Acadien in Caraquet, New Brunswick. Since 1977 the outdoor museum has used reconstructed buildings and costumed guides to portray the daily activities of Acadians from 1770 to 1949.[392] The museum uses costumes to appear more authentic to visitors. This reflects a shift to a popular belief in Canada during the 1970s which claimed that instead of embellishing the romantic aspects of the past, tourist sites should be represented authentically.[393] In order to prove that the dress used on site is authentic, the museum employs historians to design costumes that reflect the dress of eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century Acadians.[394] During the 1990s, the museum hired Jeanne Arseneault to research historically accurate costumes for the guides representing the period from 1780 to 1880. Arseneault used travel journals, pictures, newspaper articles, and research on the material culture of the area to come up with the costumes. Consequently, despite its significance

[392] LeBlanc and Boudreau, "Discourses," 98-99.
[393] Gail Cariou, "Clothing the Past: Costume Research at the Canadian Parks Service," *Material History Review* 34, no. 2 (1991): 72-74.
[394] Celine Renee Bastien, "The Temple of Authenticity: Making the Acadian Public Past at Le Village Historique Acadien," (M.A., University of New Brunswick, 2010), 1, 82, accessed 29 April, 2021, ProQuest (MR95345).

as a marker of Acadian identity during the first half of the twentieth century, at Le Village Historique Acadien, none of the guides wear the Evangeline costume as the museum did not consider it to be historically accurate enough to portray the authentic past of the Acadian people.

Instead, the costumes reflect the dress that Acadians did wear during this period. For example, on the museum's website and its Instagram page, the female guides wear long hoopless skirts, which are sometimes striped, under aprons and colourful mantelets on top and a fichu or the black veil and caps or handkerchiefs instead of the Norman cap. Further, in keeping with the historical account, the men dress in working clothes such as trousers, loose shirts, waistcoats, and felt caps. In the section of the museum that covers the end of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, in fitting with the trend of Acadians giving up regional dress for popular fashions, the interpreters wear common period dress. Although none of the interpreters wear the Evangeline costume, the striped skirts, handkerchiefs, and sabots help to portray the Acadians as a distinct community with an authentic and significant past.[395]

Figure 5.2 An interpreter wearing a costume that is more aligned with the historical record at Village Historique Acadien in Caraquet, New Brunswick. Undated photograph. *Historic Site, Village historique acadien.* Accessed 26 June 2021, https://www.villagehistoriqueacadien.com/en/site.

[395] Arseneault, "A la Recherche du Costume Acadien," 46-56; "Site Historique," Village Historique Acadien, accessed 29 April 2021, https://www.villagehistoriqueacadien.com/site; Village Historique Acadien (@village_acadien), 2018, "Nos deux équipes d'interprètes!" Instagram, 20 September, 2018.

Similarly, in 1999 the Village Historique Acadien de la Nouvelle-Ecosse opened in Pubnico, Nova Scotia. The museum aims to celebrate Acadian culture, customs, history, and traditions by portraying Acadian daily life during the early twentieth century. Similar to the Village Historique Acadien, Pubnico's historic village employs guides who wear popular early twentieth-century dress similar to the costumes in the twentieth century area of Caraquet's historic village.[396] The fact that the two museums focus on life in post-Expulsion communities demonstrates a shift from Longfellow's account of Acadians as victims during the Expulsion towards the theme of resistance to the effects of the Expulsion by establishing new communities after the diaspora.[397] In Louisiana, the Hilliard Art Museum recently put on the exhibit *Acadian Brown Cotton: The Fabric of Acadiana* which showcases handwoven blankets made out of the same brown cotton that Acadians in Louisiana used to weave garments during the nineteenth century. The focus on brown cotton similarly demonstrates the change in the focus to the post-Expulsion past.[398]

Although her relevance to Acadian culture has been downplayed since the 1950s, Acadians continue to use Evangeline and her outfit to celebrate Acadian identity today. For example, the members of the Acadian dance troupe La Baie en Joie from St. Mary's Bay dress in black laced bodices and long skirts while performing in France, Louisiana, Quebec, and the Maritime provinces.[399] In addition, Acadians have continued to use *Evangeline* as a marketing tool to attract tourists to the Maritimes. In 2013 the Charlottetown Festival included a musical

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[396] LeBlanc and Boudreau, "Discourses," 98-99; "About the village," Le Village Historique Acadien de la Nouvelle-Écosse, Welcome to L'Acadie, accessed 29 April 2021, https://levillage.novascotia.ca.
[397] Rudin, *Remembering and Forgetting in Acadie,* 215.
[398] "Acadian Brown Cotton: The Fabric of Acadiana," Field to Fashion in Acadiana, Acadian Brown Cotton, accessed 29 April 2021, https://www.acadianbrowncotton.com.
[399] LeBlanc, *Postcards from Acadie*, 157; "La Baie en Joie," Discover La Baie Sainte-Marie, accessed 29 April 2021, https://baiesaintemarie.com/en/arts-and-culture/culture/la-baie-en-joie.

based on *Evangeline* by Ted Dykstra in which the actress portraying Evangeline wore a blue kirtle and a Norman cap.[400]

Figure 5.3 Performers of the dance troupe La Baie en Joie. Undated Photograph. *La Baie en Joie, Discover la Baie Sainte-Marie.* Accessed 26 June 2021, https://baiesaintemarie.com/en/arts-and-culture/culture/la-baie-en-joie.

The shift towards using a greater variety of costumes to represent the Acadian past has sometimes caused Evangeline's outfit to more closely resemble the historic costumes worn at the Village Historique Acadien in Caraquet. For example, every year the coordinators of the Evangeline Area Agricultural Exhibition and Acadian Festival in PEI choose an Evangeline and Gabriel to represent the community. While Gabriel's costume of a waistcoat and breeches has changed very little over the years, since 1980, Evangeline has traded in her Norman cap and laced kirtle for a solid or striped skirt, fichu, mantelet, and a cap or kerchief.[401] The fact that the evolution of Evangeline's costume has matched the change towards a better understanding of early Acadian dress and the shift towards a desire to achieve greater historical accuracy shows

[400] Constantinides, "The Myth of Evangeline and the Origin of Canadian National Cinema," 72; Richard Ouzounian, "Evangeline: New musical carries hopes of Charlottetown Festival," *Toronto Star* 5 July 2013, https://www.thestar.com/entertainment/stage/2013/07/05/evangeline_new_musical_carries_hopes_of_charlottetown_festival.html.

[401] "Évangéline and Gabriel," Evangeline Area Agricultural Exhibition and Acadian Festival, Exhibition and Festival History, accessed 29 April 2021, https://www.expositionfestival.ca/about/history/evangeline-and-gabriel/.

that while her place in Acadian identity has changed over the years, Evangeline remains a significant symbol of the culture and heritage. Moreover, even though the Acadians have adjusted their representation the collective past to fit contemporary values, Evangeline has evolved alongside the community. However, the Festival Acadian de Clare has remained true to tradition and, at least up until 2020, the community has continued to choose an Evangeline wearing a Norman cap and a laced kirtle to represent the area.[402] Further, since 1969 Louisiana's International Acadian Festival has similarly kept the tradition of choosing an Evangeline to represent the community in the Evangeline costume alive. The Evangeline chosen in 2020 wore a black laced bodice, a long skirt, and a cap to festival events.[403]

Figure 5.4 Evangeline and Gabriel chosen for the 2012 Evangeline Area Agricultural Exhibition and Acadian Festival. Undated Photograph. *Évangéline and Gabriel, Evangeline Area Agricultural Exhibition and Acadian Festival*. Accessed 26 June 2021, https://www.expositionfestival.ca/about/history/evangeline-and-gabriel/.

The continued use of the traditional Evangeline costume alongside updated versions of her outfit demonstrates the importance of *Evangeline* to Acadian communities even though the

[402] Festival acadien de Clare (@festivalacadien), 2020, "Voici votre Monsieur et Madame," Instagram, accessed 26 July, 2020.
[403] "Publicity Shoot," International Acadian Festival, 2020 Festival, accessed 18 July 2021, https://www.acadianfestival.org/20publicity/index.html.

way that the collective past is remembered has shifted. Since Longfellow's version is not the only memory of the past anymore, Acadians today incorporate other costumes into celebrations. However, the costume is still a useful tool to show Acadians that they are part of the community and to feel united with other members. Therefore, the Evangeline costume has become an identity marker and the Deportation is still what unites Acadians as the pride in survival after dispersal and persecution is what motivates them to take action to preserve their culture for the future.

Through an examination of pre-Expulsion and post-Expulsion Acadian dress, this thesis discussed the ways that Acadians have used clothing to express a distinct identity. In addition, this thesis examined the process of reimagining the Acadian past to gain a better understanding of why the community chose to represent itself in the image of a fictional figure and the extent to which an invented account of the past helped a shattered and fragmented community rebuild itself to create a unified national identity.

As Chapter One discussed, during their time in Acadia before the Deportation, French settlers became Acadians through the development of unique styles of dress. The combination of local and external influences led to a distinct mixing of styles. As Chapter Two has noted, Acadians continued to wear a distinct style of dress during the period following the Expulsion. Since the Expulsion created a diasporic community, there was some regional variation. However, the distinct styles differentiated the Acadians from other ethnic groups and travellers to the region believed their dress was unusual and old-fashioned which in turn contributed to the continuation of a distinct identity. The significance of women's dress to group identity was subject to some debate. Acadians viewed women's traditional attire as a tool to either implement change or a way to reject modernity in the face of rapid industrialization. However, by the end of

the nineteenth century, increasing industrialization caused most Acadians to gradually align their dress with that of mainstream North Americans.

Acadians and non-Acadians alike reimagined the Acadian past based on the 1847 epic poem *Evangeline* by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Rooted in the romantic movement, which prized folk tradition, *Evangeline* became popular because it described a simple and picturesque version of the past. As a woman, Evangeline herself promoted a romanticized view of the traditional lifestyle. Since the poem described the Acadians as Norman peasants, they became associated with this image. Outsiders often depicted Acadians as wearing a Norman peasant costume rather than their traditional dress. Although left out of this phase of the reconfiguration of their past, Evangeline's Norman peasant costume became a marker of the Acadian people in popular culture. The public could easily recognize variations of the costume because illustrations, costumed events and advertisements displayed the stereotypes surrounding *Evangeline*.

The Acadian's adoption of the Evangeline costume beginning in the 1920s, based on the popular images of Evangeline as a Norman peasant, reveals that Acadians wanted to remember their past based on the values described in the poem. *Evangeline* was a powerful tool for promoting nationalism. Although the costume signified an event that tore the community apart, by wearing the costume at national gatherings, it became symbolic of the survival and reunification of Acadians despite the attempt to destroy the community during the Expulsion. In addition, through the costume, Acadians performed their identity by demonstrating that they were part of the group and participating in the constructed memory of the past.

By manipulating their historic dress to match the Evangeline costume, the Acadians re-created the past based on a more desirable version—one that championed their chosen cultural

identity and proclaimed that they had been victims of a historically significant event. Acadians created a memory of the past that reflected contemporary values projected onto the past rather than a more historically accurate version of the past. However, the invented past recreated the Acadians' contemporary reality, not only because it brought disparate communities together and instilled pride in the group identity, but because the chosen identity influenced how they thought of themselves at the time. As David Lowenthal has noted, "[c]ontinually refashioned, the remade past continuously remoulds us."[404]

[404] Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country,* 1.

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