

this powerful fleet and army, the French under M. de Drucourt, whose wife was constantly on the ramparts animating the soldiers, made a most heroic defense for eighteen days, when they were obliged to capitulate. The combatants were now mostly sent to France, and the sea and land forces of the garrison, to the number of 5,720, carried prisoners to England. The stores and ammunition, and the 227 cannon, constituted a prize of immense value. The British government, fearing that Louisbourg might again fall into the hands of the French, resolved to destroy it, notwithstanding the immense expense and value of its fortifications and buildings, which included two fine churches, a hospital, a number of handsome stone houses for the officers, and various other public buildings. The houses were accordingly burned or torn down, and the fortifications blown up with gunpowder. The site of the town, formerly so flourishing, is now a melancholy and silent scene of deserted ruins, inhabited only by a few obscure fishermen, and pastured by a few sheep; a sad monument of the instability of human fortunes.

During nearly a quarter of a century after the destruction of Louisbourg, Cape Breton remained unoccupied except by a few scattered fishermen, and neglected by its new owners the English. After the peace of Paris in 1738, it was, however, erected into a separate government, under Lieutenant-governor Desbarres and an executive council. The town of Sydney was now laid out for a capital, and the public offices established there. But the island did not prosper under this arrangement; and since 1820 it has been reannexed to Nova Scotia, of which it now forms two counties.

The English settlements scarcely began until after the American revolution, at which time a number of loyalist families removed into it. In 1800 settlers began to come in from the highlands and islands of Scotland; from which regions a steady influx continued for many years. The population, now amounting to more than 60,000 of Scotch, French and Irish descent, is distributed over the island, except in the rugged districts of its northern portion. The Scotch are most numerous; and are found on the shores of the Bras d'Or, on the Gut of Canseau and along the coast to Port Hood or Justaucorps Harbor, and at Cape Mabon and St. Esprit. The Acadians are chiefly at Arichat, Petit de Grat, Ardoise, the little Bras d'Or, Marguerite and Cheticamp. There are also some English, Jersey men, and Dutch, and two or three hundred Micmac Indians, mostly worthless and degraded vagabonds. They have several reservations of land, and a