

unreasonable in this demand, seeing that the English failed to carry out the terms of the treaty, which gave the Acadians the right to leave the country, and seeing, too, that the French who resided on the north side of the Bay of Fundy, at River St. John, Chipody, Petecodiac and Memramcook, were not only their compatriots but their brethren and relatives. Such a request was made in after years by those who came from New England and settled on the Acadian lands when they did not desire to wage a war with their kinsmen, who were fighting for American independence. They had been retained in the country contrary to their will and contrary to the terms of the treaty of Utrecht—was it not most natural that they should impose the conditions under which they should continue as subjects of Great Britain?

As to the character of the oath which the Acadians took, I think there is not a doubt that it was at no time unqualified. In support of this contention let me first cite Governor Lawrence, the very man who deported the Acadians. In his circular to the governors of New England, which accompanied the transports laden with exiled Acadians, appears the following: “The Acadians ever refused to take the oath of allegiance *without having at the same time from the governor an assurance, in writing, that they should not be called upon to bear arms in the defence of the Province, and with this General Phillips did comply*, of which His Majesty disapproved”.

Again, writing to Sir Thomas Robinson, November 30th, 1755, Lawrence says, speaking of the Acadians of Beaubassin:

“They were the descendants of those French who had taken the oath of allegiance to His Majesty in the time of General Phillip’s government with the reserve of not bearing arms”.