

The Coming of the New England Planters to the Annapolis Valley

R. S. LONGLEY

Department of History, Acadia University, 1929-64
(Read before the Nova Scotia Historical Society, April 1960)¹

It is now more than a century since the well known humorist, Judge Thomas Chandler Haliburton, had his inimitable Yankee salesman, Sam Slick, exclaim: "Now if you want to know all about us and the Bluenoses — a pretty considerable share of Yankee blood in them too, I tell you — the old stock comes from New England and the breed is tolerable pure yet, near about one-half apple sarce and t'other half molasses, except to the easterd where there is a cross of the Scotch."² Today the ebullient Clockmaker's obvious attempt to assign certain personal characteristics to the people of western Nova Scotia has little meaning, but his racial and geographical descriptions still stand. Most of the settlers commonly known in the province as Planters, or Pre-Loyalists, came from Sam Slick's native Connecticut. Others were from Massachusetts and Rhode Island. They came by sea to the Basins of Minas and Annapolis to occupy the lands made vacant by the *deportation of the Acadians* five years before. As we observe the bi-centenary of their arrival, a number of questions suggest themselves: who where the Planters, why did they come to Nova Scotia, where did they settle, and what customs and institutions did they bring with them? To answer these questions in detail would require a large book, but a few bi-centennial observations may be made.

I

The original New England Planters were not those who came to Nova Scotia in 1760, but their ancestors, the hardy middle class folk, commonly known as Pilgrims and Puritans, who for religious, political, and economic motives left their homes in the midlands and south of England more than a century before, to *plant* a new England on the Atlantic coast of North America. Their numbers increased rapidly, both by immigration and by births. At the outbreak of the Revolution in 1775 New England had a population of 800,000.³

1 Reprinted from the Nova Scotia Historical Society, *Collections* (Halifax, 1961), 81-101. We would like to thank the officers of the Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society for permission to include this article in our collection.

2 T. C. Haliburton, *Sam Slick*, ed. Ray Palmer Baker (New York, 1923), 46.

3 H. L. Osgood, *American Colonies in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, 7 Vols. (New York, 1904-25) passim. Simeon Perkins, *Diary*, ed. H. Innis (Champlain Society, 1948), 88.

One of the distinguishing features of pioneer New England was the constant *migration* of people from the coast to the interior, to what has been called the *frontier*, the meeting place of civilization and wilderness, beyond which lay the unbroken forest, the home of Indians and wild animals. Here the fur trader had his hut, and here the adventurer found activity and excitement. Here also was abundant land, the desire of the Planter. Thus almost as soon as New England was founded, individuals, groups, and even whole congregations, were on the move "trekking" westward to find free land.

An early example of organized migration to the frontier was a congregation from Newtown, near Boston, who, led by their minister, Rev. Thomas Hooker, crossed one hundred miles of uncharted wilderness to settle in the Connecticut Valley. They lived in tents and wagons, carried their personal belongings, and drove their cattle before them. When asked why they withdrew from Massachusetts, for they were not compelled to do so, Hooker replied that the many communities on, or near, the coast were too close together to give them all sufficient land, that the Connecticut Valley was commodious and fruitful, and that "it was the strong bent of their spirits to remove thither."⁴ In later years other motives, political and religious, also inspired migrations, but always the major consideration was land.

Since most of the Planters who settled in the Annapolis Valley came from south-western New England, a glance at this area will indicate some reasons for the emigration. In 1637 Connecticut had only 800 people. A century later the number had grown to 38,000. In the next ten years the population doubled, and in 1760 it was 141,000.⁵ In our industrial age more than this number are found in many a North American city, but in the 18th century fully 90 per cent of the population tilled the soil, and as farming in New England was extensive rather than intensive, many a Planter with a limited acreage found it difficult to make a comfortable living for his "teeming" offspring. New England families were large, from five to fifteen children being quite common.⁶ As the sons grew up, one generally remained with his parents, and the others set out for the nearest unoccupied area to carve homes and farms for themselves in the virgin forest. Girls married young and accompanied their husbands to the frontier. The pioneers had no tasteful surveyor or landscape artist to lay off

4 R.L. Morrow, *Connecticut Influences in Western Massachusetts and Vermont* (New Haven, 1936), 2.

5 *Ibid.*

6 Two examples of large families may be cited. On the tombstone of Mrs. Joseph Parker is written she "left two hundred or upward of children and grandchildren." She had fourteen children. *Tercentenary of Groton, Mass., 1655-1955* (Groton, 1955), 40. Joseph DoLittle of Connecticut had 13 children, 72 grandchildren, and 232 great-grandchildren. Morrow, 2.

their lots. They got land when and where they could, from the Indians, from Governments, and by squatters' rights. After 1727 the government of Connecticut began to sell land at public auction, which gave wealthy persons wanting estates, and business men desiring investments, an opportunity to purchase it. Thus with Planters constantly making farms, and speculators seeking profits, it was not long before the best land in the lower Connecticut Valley was occupied, and what remained was so full of swamps, hills, and rocks that it could be gained only "out of fire as it were, by hard blows and for small recompense."⁷ Under these conditions, an area which had once been a Paradise for the land hungry farmer, began to send emigrants to other frontiers. At first they crossed to Long Island and the New Jersey Shore. Later they went to Upper New York, Pennsylvania, and even as far south as the Carolinas and Georgia. In the middle of the 18th century the stream turned northward, through western Massachusetts into the wooded valleys of New Hampshire and Vermont. Sometimes young men serving in the armed forces passed an unoccupied area of great beauty and fertility, and after the conclusion of hostilities returned alone or with others, to make it their home. Connecticut became like bees when the hive is full. The surplus population "swarmed" and went off to found new communities and townships. The method of migration was patterned on the New England Town Meeting. A group wishing to move met in some convenient place, elected a moderator and clerk, appointed a committee of management, and decided upon fees. The committee in turn employed agents to negotiate the necessary grants, and to arrange for the "trek." It was in the midst of all this activity that lands in Nova Scotia were opened for settlement. Here was a new frontier. It was further away than the vales of the Green and White mountains, but travel was by water rather than over rough country, and the land was cleared and fertile. It is not surprising, therefore, that for a few years New England had an eastern, as well as a western and northern, frontier. That it ceased so soon was not due to a lack of either people or land, but to the American Revolution which placed Nova Scotia and New England under separate flags. After the revolution, the frontier of the United States continued westward until there was no more free land.⁸

II

Although Nova Scotia became a British colony in 1713, it was thirty-six years before any serious attempt was made to settle it, and forty-five years before it was granted that birthright of Englishmen at home and abroad,

7 Morrow, 2.

8 For a discussion on the importance of the Frontier see F.J. Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," *Proceedings of the State Historical Society* (Wisconsin, 1893).

an elected assembly. At least six schemes intended to promote immigration were mooted. One of these came from the Waldos of Boston who, soon after the capture of Louisburg in 1745, proposed to bring 66,000 settlers from Europe, chiefly Great Britain, to Nova Scotia in return for a large grant of land, and an expected profit of two million dollars.⁹ This offer was not accepted, but soon after the Board of Trade, looking forward to the end of the war, planned to settle 3000 disbanded soldiers in the province. Giving land to men discharged from the services was a common procedure, but was not always popular with civil administrations, on the ground that the ex-soldier was in general a poor farmer. The New England Planter, on the other hand, because of his love of the soil, sobriety, industry, and thrift, would be a most acceptable immigrant.

With this in mind, the dynamic Governor of Massachusetts, William Shirley, offered what is known as the *Great Plan*, which was to bring 6000 settlers to Nova Scotia in the next ten years. Two thousand of these were to be disbanded soldiers, 2000 were to be brought from Great Britain and Western Europe, and 2000 were to come from New England.¹⁰ The first did not become of immediate concern as the wars with the French were not yet over, but the second part of the plan was realized by the founding of Halifax in 1749. It had, of course, political implications, such as the establishment of a capital on the Atlantic coast, but as an organized migration it followed a pattern. Advertisements in the *Royal Gazette*, handbills through the Customs Houses and Post Offices, and personal interviews were used to attract settlers. The volunteer emigrants were sent out on ships hired by the British Government, and Parliament voted money to pay the costs. Governor Edward Cornwallis brought more than 2000 people to settle in Nova Scotia.¹¹

To tap the third source of Shirley's proposed immigrants, New England, two conditions were necessary: there must be certainty that Nova Scotia would not be reconquered by, or restored to, France; and the province must have an elected Assembly. The French danger was removed by the capture of Fort Beausejour and the deportation of the Acadians in 1755, and the surrender of Louisburg, the Dunkirk of America, in 1758. The Lords of Trade instructed Governor Lawrence to call an Assembly, and members of his Council, such as Jonathan Belcher, favored it. In spite of its obvious connection with the desired immigration, Lawrence delayed action for several years. Then came the great year, 1758. On October 2nd, a few weeks after the fall of Louisburg, the first Assembly met in Halifax. The way was thus opened for the New England Planters to come to Nova

9 Norman MacDonald, *Canada: Immigration and Settlement, 1763-1841* (Toronto, 1939), 40; Chester Martin, *Empire and Commonwealth* (Toronto, 1929), 59.

10 This was known as Shirley's *Great Plan*, Martin, 60.

11 A. Basye, *Lords Commissioners of Trade and Plantation* (New Haven, 1925), 40 ff.

Scotia.

On October 12, just ten days after the Assembly convened, Lawrence, with the advice of his Council, prepared a Proclamation which was published in the *Boston Gazette*. It informed the people of New England that since the enemy which had formerly disturbed and harassed the province was no longer able to do so, the time had come to people and cultivate, not only the lands made vacant by the removal of the Acadians, but other parts of "this valuable province" as well. The Proclamation concluded with the words "I shall be ready to receive any proposals that may be hereafter made to me for effectually settling the vacated, or any other lands within the said province."¹² Applications could be made directly to Halifax, or through two well known business and colonizing agencies, Thomas Hancock of Boston and Delancey and Watts in New York.

The Governor's Proclamation was widely read, and created immediate interest, especially in Southern Connecticut. It appealed to several classes of people, adventurers, speculators, and especially land hungry Planters. Although complete evidence is lacking, it seems that a considerable group from New London, Norwich, Lebanon, Lyme, Tolland, and other townships in south-eastern Connecticut, and some from neighboring Rhode Island, met in the Town Hall at Norwich and formed a grantee's organization. The *Boston News Letter* and *Gazette* in the years 1758 to 1763 contain many notices of similar meetings in Massachusetts, but as Connecticut did not then have a newspaper, records are not available.¹³ There must have been a number of these organizations, for inquiries came in from individuals and groups, both to Lawrence in Halifax and to the agents in Boston and New York. To answer questions regarding the amount of land an individual could receive, and to describe conditions in Nova Scotia, Lawrence issued a second Proclamation dated January 11, 1759. Townships were being established to contain 100,000 acres. Land would be granted according the grantee's ability to enclose and cultivate it. Every head of a family was entitled to receive 100 acres of wild land for himself and an additional 50 acres for each member of his household. No quit rent would be charged for the first ten years; after that it would be one shilling for each fifty acres. The grantee would be required to plant, cultivate, and improve one-third of his holdings each decade until all was under cultivation. Land along the Bay of Fundy Shore would be so distributed as to give each grantee a share of upland, meadow and marsh. To prevent speculation, no person could receive more than 1000 acres. As to the government, the Province had an Assembly, and every township

12 Public Archives of Nova Scotia, Minutes of Council, 12 October 1758.

13 The meeting in Norwich is suggested in Frances Caulkins, *History of Norwich* (Norwich, 1874).

with at least fifty families had the privilege of electing two members to it. The courts were like those of New England. Religious freedom was enjoyed by all Protestants who were allowed to build their own Meeting Houses and choose their own ministers.¹⁴

These answers were reasonably satisfactory, although no specific mention was made of New England's most prized institution, the Town Meeting. The grantees held further meetings. At one of these it was voted to send five agents, Major Robert Denison, Joseph Otis, Jonathan Harris, Amos Fuller, and John Hicks, to look over the lands in Nova Scotia, and if, in their judgement, conditions were favorable, to make an agreement with the Provincial Government. The first four of the envoys were from Connecticut; Hicks was from Rhode Island. Dennison, Otis and Harris were the seniors of the group; Fuller and Hicks were younger.

In 1759 Robert Denison was sixty-two years of age. He was a landowner in the north-eastern section of New London, having inherited land purchased by his father from the Indians in 1710. He donated land to the Congregational Church in New London, in return for which he was permitted to build a pew in the church for himself and his heirs forever.¹⁵ He took part in the French and Indian wars, and in 1745 commanded one of the eight companies of Walcott's Connecticut Brigade at the siege of Louisburg. He was not discharged from the army until 1761. He settled at Horton and was one of the first members of that township in the Assembly, 1761-1765. He represents the soldier and adventurer, as well as the Planter, in the migration. He was seeking land for himself and his family.¹⁶

Joseph Otis emigrated to New London from Massachusetts, where he had been a judge of the Court of Common Pleas and a member of the General Court, or Assembly. Like Denison, his family pew was in the front of the Church. He was by no means a land hungry Planter, for he owned considerable property in north-eastern Connecticut. His interest in Nova Scotia was largely that of an agent for others, or as a speculator. It was probable that when he saw the individual grants were limited, he lost interest. He did not settle in the province.

Jonathan Harris was a son-in-law of Otis, and no doubt shared his attitudes and interests. He too did not become a Nova Scotia Planter, but his brother, Lebbeus, and his son, James, were grantees of Horton. Like Denison, Lebbeus Harris was elected to the House of Assembly.

Fuller was a fellow townsman of Denison, Otis, and Harris, but he was much younger, being but thirty-eight years of age. Because of age, or

14 Minutes of Council, 11 Jan. 1759.

15 F. M. Caulkins, *History of New London* (Hartford, 1852), passim. A pew in the front of the church was a recognition of distinction.

16 Denison was twice married and had 15 children. The first family were all grown up and on their own in 1760. Many of the younger family had also reached maturity.

interests, or both, he became friendly with Hicks, and the two later worked together in their colonizing ventures.

Hicks was a Rhode Island Quaker. His ancestor, Robert Hicks, was one of the Pilgrims. He was definitely a Planter, and he and his eldest son, Benjamin, were grantees in the township of Falmouth. Later they sold their lots in Falmouth and moved to Annapolis County. Here the father was elected to the Assembly, and the son achieved a considerable degree of affluence.¹⁷

The five agents came to Halifax by ship, and on April 18, 1759, appeared before the Council. They were men of influence and position and were treated as such. The Governor and four Councilors, Jonathan Belcher, Benjamin Green, Charles Morris, and John Collier, were present. The first three were New Englanders, and understood the aspirations of the agents and their associates; Collier, like Lawrence, was of the British military tradition.¹⁸

Before admitting the agents, Lawrence raised the question as to whether negotiations should be undertaken without the knowledge and approval of the British Lords of Trade, but after due deliberation it was decided that since delay might dampen the enthusiasm of the agents, discussions should proceed. The Council was encouraged by the fact that the aspiring immigrants seemed willing, apart from transportation, to pay all cost of removal.¹⁹

On being admitted to the Council, the agents asked a number of questions which were duly answered. These were concerned with what happened to land if the grantee should die before the terms of the grant had been fully met, the possibility of remitting the quit rent of some settlers unable to pay it, and the condition of the Minas dykes. It was agreed that if settlement were made, the Planters should be given weapons to defend themselves, and that they would not be subject to impressment in the army or navy for ten years. The agents then asked to be taken at Government expense to look over the proposed place of settlement. The request was granted, with the understanding that if all was satisfactory, grants would be made as soon as the surveys were completed. Surveyor-General Charles Morris was to accompany them to aid in choosing sites for future townships.²⁰

The agents set out on a Government ship with the Surveyor-General in command, and nine soldiers as guards. The vessel sailed around Yarmouth into the Bay of Fundy which enabled the visitors to view the lands along

17 W.A. Calnek, *History of Annapolis County* (Toronto, 1897), 332. Elizabeth Coward, *History of Bridgetown* (Kentville, 1955).

18 T.B. Akins, *Selections from the Public Documents of the Province of Nova Scotia* (Halifax, 1869), 255-56; 293, and 315 footnote.

19 Minutes of Council, 18 April 1759.

20 *Ibid.*

the Annapolis river before proceeding to Minas Basin. They landed on the shore of the Basin and spent many busy days studying the topography and soil of the large area between Cape Blomidon and Piziquid, now Windsor. They were delighted with all they saw. Seven rivers emptied their waters into the Basin, and on the banks of each was an abundance of fertile soil. The hills were covered with forests and the apple trees planted by the Acadians were almost ready to bud, the grass on the dykes was green, and the uplands seemed to be waiting for the plough.²¹ When the inspection was over, the agents hurried back to the capital where they arrived on May 17. They at once resumed negotiations with the Council. The latter wanted settlers, and the agents were ready to supply them, so an agreement was concluded without delay. The now enthusiastic agents were quite ready to settle two townships, Horton and Cornwallis, each of 100,000 acres, with 200 and 150 families respectively. These were to be brought to Nova Scotia at Government expense, and each passenger might bring stock, tools, building materials, and household goods up to a weight of two tons.²² To families of several members this concession was quite a boon. Most of the prospective settlers were quite able to pay all expenses save transportation, but fifty families were reported too poor to do so. For these the agents requested one bushel of grain a month for each individual for one year, or until the first harvest.²³ Lawrence hesitated to make this grant, feeling that free land and free transportation were sufficient. Also, thus far the Lords of Trade had been unable to express an opinion on the new immigration policy, and there was a real possibility that it might be rejected, especially if the costs were high. On the other hand, the Council did not wish to lose more than two hundred settlers for the sake of a few hundred bushels of corn, so the free grain was included in the agreement.²⁴

Well pleased with what they had accomplished, the three senior agents, Denison, Otis, and Harris, hastened back to Connecticut to report what had been arranged and to seek additional grantees. Fuller and Hicks remained in Halifax to present a supplementary plan of settlement.

While scouting at Minas, Fuller and Hicks came upon a former Acadian settlement on the north bank of the Avon river, opposite Fort Piziquid. The marshes and uplands were fertile, and half-destroyed buildings still dotted the landscape. The two men requested a grant of 50,000 acres on which to settle one hundred families from Rhode Island, fifty in 1759 and fifty in 1760.²⁵ The Council agreed to the terms and promptly created the township of Falmouth. Fuller then returned home, but Hicks remained to

21 A.W.H. Eaton, *History of Kings County* (Salem, 1910), 63.

22 Minutes of Council, 18 May 1759.

23 *Ibid.*

24 *Ibid.*

25 *Ibid.*, 19 May 1759.

submit a list of potential grantees.²⁶

With the return of the four Connecticut agents news of their successful negotiations in Nova Scotia spread rapidly, and led to the formation of other immigration societies, not only in Connecticut, but in Massachusetts and Rhode Island as well. Soon more agents arrived in Halifax. Most of them were representatives of actual organizations and grantees, but a few proved impostors.²⁷

The first of the new applicants for land were James Read and John Grow of Massachusetts, and Paul Crocker of eastern New Hampshire, who represented a group from those colonies. They knew the country around Annapolis, and wished to have the protection of the old fort. They therefore requested a grant of a township of the usual 100,000 acres in the picturesque area between the Annapolis River and the Bay of Fundy. The Council approved the grant on June 27, 1759, and thus established the township of Granville. It was to be settled by 200 Planters, but at the moment the agents could list only 138. They were to find 40 more. The remaining 22 were to come later. The grant was to "Mr. Crocker, Mr. Grant, and others."²⁸

Next to appear before the Council were four agents from Connecticut, Edward Mott, Benjamin Kimball, Bliss Willoughby, and Major Samuel Starr. Some of their prospective settlers had served with Colonel Robert Monckton at Beausejour in 1755, and so knew of the isthmus of Chignecto. Knowing the success of Denison and associates, they requested free transportation to the proposed site of settlement.²⁹ The Governor complied with their wishes. The details of their visit to Chignecto are beyond the scope of this paper, except for the activities of Samuel Starr. He and Willoughby decided not to return to Halifax by ship, and so travelled overland to Cobequid, and by whaleboat to Windsor. Here Willoughby rejoined Mott and Kimball in Halifax, but Starr turned west to Grand Pré. Later he crossed the Cornwallis river and explored the new township between the river and the Bay of Fundy. He was so pleased with what he saw that he abandoned the Chignecto project and became a Cornwallis Planter.³⁰ He settled at Starr's Point where he lived highly respected until his death in 1799. His descendants have been active in the political, industrial, military, and social life of Kings County.³¹

The fifth request for land in this momentous year came from Daniel Knowlton who made application on behalf of himself and fifty-two others

26 *Ibid.*, 16 July 1759.

27 *Ibid.*, 3 Oct. 1759.

28 *Ibid.*, 27 and 29 June, 67 and 71.

29 *Ibid.*, 19 July 1759, 77

30 From the papers in the possession of the Starr family, Eaton, 531-2.

31 Eaton, 824-6.

for land at Cobequid. The Council thereupon established the township of Onslow.³²

The final grant for 1759 was to a well organized group from central Massachusetts whose managing committee was Ebenezer Felch, John Woodward, and Jason Glezen. Associated with them were Abner Morse, Samuel Bent, and Henry Evans. Like the Granville grantees, they wished to settle near the fort, and so applied for a grant on the south side of the river in the township of Annapolis.³³

The success of his Proclamations of 1758-59 gave Lawrence great satisfaction. Hardly had Denison and his fellow agents withdrawn from their first meeting with the Council, when the Governor wrote the Lords of Trade that those who had arrived represented "some hundreds of associated families" and that they intended to "chuse lands for the immediate establishment of two or more townships."³⁴ Later he explained to an attentive House of Assembly that "very extensive tracts of the vacated lands on the Bay of Fundy" had been granted, "to industrious and substantial farmers," and that applications for more were coming in faster than he could prepare the grants. "And I make no doubt," he concluded "but that the well peopling of the whole" will keep pace with our warmest and most rapid wishes."³⁵

Even before these optimistic and cheering words had been spoken, word reached Halifax that fishing vessels had been seized near Canso, several persons had been killed near Dartmouth, and prospective settlers had been fired upon near Cape Sable. Also bands of Indians, with a few Frenchman, had threatened the forts at Windsor, Lunenburg, and Sackville.³⁶ Lawrence gave this news to his Council, and consulted with John Hicks who was still in the province. All agreed that the immigration from New England should be postponed until more peaceful conditions prevailed.³⁷ It was then decided that all agreements made for 1759 would not become operative until the spring of 1760.

Although the anticipated activity for 1759 was thus delayed, the next few months were far from uneventful, either in New England or Nova Scotia. In Connecticut meetings of enthusiastic grantees continued, even in the face of official coldness and hostility. Some of the original promoters, such as Otis and Harris, withdrew from active participation and transferred their shares to others. Some lost their enthusiasm because

32 Minutes of Council, 24 July 1759, 78, and 26 Oct. 26 1759, 90.

33 *Ibid.*

34 J.B. Brebner, *The Neutral Yankees of Nova Scotia*, (New York, 1937), 31.

35 T.C. Haliburton, *An Historical and Statistical Account of Nova Scotia*, 2 Vols. (Halifax, 1829), I, 225.

36 Minutes of Council, 16 July 1759.

37 *Ibid.*

opportunities for speculation were lacking. Others were dropped when they did not pay the required fees, but their places were taken by new applicants. Thus while names might appear today and be gone tomorrow, which accounts for grantees who did not come to Nova Scotia, there were no fundamental changes in either plans or numbers.

Meanwhile Lawrence in Halifax made changes in the Council and Assembly in preparation for the incoming tide. The Council, because of withdrawals from the province, had been reduced to four members. It was strengthened by the addition of Richard Bulkeley, Thomas Saul, and Joseph Gerrish.³⁸ In the first Assembly there were many who served as "members at large." Under the revised order, five counties, Annapolis, Cumberland, Halifax, Horton, and Lunenburg, received two members each. Four townships, Annapolis, Cumberland, Horton, and Lunenburg, as agreed by the Proclamation of January 11, 1759, were given two members each, which, with four from Halifax, gave the province the original number, twenty-two seats.³⁹ An election was held on November 20. Thus a new Assembly greeted the Planters on their arrival the following spring and within a year they had representatives in it. In the same month of November an angry sea swept over the Minas dykes which, after five years of neglect, were in a state of disrepair. The Governor visited the area and found the damage severe, but not disastrous. Soldiers and Acadians later helped repair the dykes, and to make other improvements.

Meanwhile Lawrence received a dispatch from the Lords of Trade. As was anticipated, they viewed the Governor's immigration project with some doubt. The cost, it was feared, would be great, and the money should be used to place disbanded soldiers on the land. In a well reasoned reply the Governor pointed out that in an earlier dispatch their Lordship had admitted that Planters from the older colonies made excellent farmers. It was an equally well known fact that disbanded soldiers did not make good Planters. As proof of this, it could be shown that every soldier who had come to Nova Scotia since the founding of Halifax had either left the province or had become a dramseller. In addition, to place soldiers on the land the Government must find, not only transportation, but stock, utensils, and building materials. It would be much better, the Governor concluded, to place disbanded soldiers in the older colonies where, if they failed as farmers, they could find other employment.⁴⁰ These statements, supported as they were by facts, convinced the Lords of Trade that Lawrence's policy was sound. He was therefore given the authority to carry "the same into execution."⁴¹ There was still room for the disbanded

38 *Ibid.*, 17 Aug. 1759, 80.

39 *Ibid.*, 22 Aug. 1759, 82.

40 Haliburton, *An Historical and Statistical Account of Nova Scotia*, I, 235 ff.

41 Lords of Trade to Lawrence, 16 Feb. 1760, *Boston Gazette*, 28 July 1760.

soldier to settle in the province, but the Governor's immediate concern was the Planter migration of 1760.

In New England the associations of grantees continued their preparations to emigrate. Those who were owners of property disposed of it, and purchased stock and materials which could be used in the new homes. Some received gifts from parents. Then came the journey to the place of embarkation. In Connecticut it was near at hand, in other colonies more distant. The chief problem was to know just when the ships would arrive. During the waiting, food had to be obtained for both man and beast. Finally spring came and the migration began.

It is from the pen of Chief Surveyor Morris, that we learn of the early arrivals. He left Halifax in May to visit the various centres of activity. Calling first at Liverpool, he found the newcomers busy and satisfied. He then sailed to the Annapolis Basin where he greeted forty-five settlers for the township of Annapolis, and a small group of lot layers who came in advance of the Granville grantees. Those in the township of Annapolis sailed on a ship, the *Charming Molly*, and landed a short distance up the river from the fort. According to Morris, the ship had been chartered from Hancock in Boston to make two voyages to Annapolis for Henry Evans and associates.⁴²

From the *Boston News Letter* we know that the Annapolis grantees held an important meeting at the inn of William Bryant in Sudbury, Massachusetts, on February 13, 1760. Here, with business-like precision, preparations were made for the removal to Nova Scotia. All who decided they did not want to emigrate, or had not paid their fees, were dropped. Henry Evans was employed to go to Halifax, to conclude negotiations with the Government so that the settlers might be at work in their new homes by the end of May.⁴³ Receipts for money paid Evans for his services are among the Caleb Davis papers in the New England Historical Society in Boston.

According to his *Journal*, Evans left Marblehead on April 4, 1760, and after a tedious voyage of nine days arrived at Halifax. Here he completed his business with the Governor and Council, and notified authorities at Annapolis to expect the settlers within a month. By May 1st he was back in Boston where on the 5th he visited Hancock's and engaged the *Charming Molly* for two voyages. He then attended a final meeting of the grantees at Framington. On the 15th those who were to form the advance group, or working party, were ready to sail. As was so often the case with sailing ships, a sequence of contrary winds and aggravating calms prevented a speedy crossing. Evans reports the arrival at Annapolis in June, but Morris found settlers there at the end of May.⁴⁴

42 Morris to Governor Lawrence, 1 June 1760, Minutes of Council.

43 *Boston News Letter*, 31 Jan. 1760.

44 Evans, *Journal* in Calnek, 148-50. Morris to Lawrence, *op. cit.*

On her first voyage the *Charming Molly* carried thirty-one men, two women, and twelve children, as well as stock and equipment.⁴⁵ Most of the men left their wives and families in Massachusetts until they had prepared living quarters for them. These and other families came later in the year.⁴⁶ The grantees met to appoint lot layers and other necessary officials, and so introduced the New England Town Meeting to Nova Scotia. The lot layers, of whom Evans was one, divided the land, after which individuals holdings were determined by lot. Each head of a family received the normal share of 500 acres, and some of the low land which had been cultivated by the Acadians. Defence was provided by the garrison at Annapolis and the organization of the male settlers as militia. The building of homes went forward rapidly. Within a few years the Annapolis township had a population of 500. The arrival of the Granville grantees late in 1760, and early in 1761, completed the initial migration, but settlers continued to arrive for the next two or three years. The Granville grants were also 500 acres each, and extended from the river to the Bay of Fundy. As in Annapolis, the location was determined by lot. Later a number of exchanges and sales were made in both townships to bring relatives and friends together.⁴⁷ The Town Meeting was used as a system of local government and administration, but the central village or town plot was not adopted as in the eastern end of the Valley. The chief occupation was farming, although some of the Planters became fishermen, millers and sawyers.

From Annapolis, Surveyor Morris sailed to Windsor where he arrived just in time to see six vessels under the command of a Captain Rogers come up the Avon river and dock a little distance from the fort. These contained the first contingent of between two and three hundred of the Connecticut Planters whose destination was the township of Horton. The ships had been hired by Lawrence and Council, as nearly as can be determined, at the cost of ten shillings per ton weight of the vessel per month. Thus a ship of eighty tons cost £40 a month.⁴⁸ In the case of the six ships, winds and high seas kept them hiding in coves and harbours, so that it took three weeks to make the crossing from New London to Windsor, and must have cost the Government nearly £200. The passengers arrived weary and half sick, and fodder for the stock had been exhausted. But once on land, the settlers regained their optimism, and they were soon off to their new homes, in true

45 For the names of the passengers, see Calnek, 151. Such names as Kent, Bent, Rice, Morse, and others are still to be found in the Valley.

46 Calnek, 151.

47 Calnek, Chapter XI; Coward, 10-14.

48 This was approximately the rate paid for the ships which took away the Acadians. Akins, 285-93.

pioneer fashion, driving their cattle before them.⁴⁹

On June 4, 1760, the main flotilla, consisting of twenty-two ships hired by the Government of Nova Scotia to transport the Connecticut Planters to Horton and Cornwallis rounded Cape Blomidon and anchored in the estuary of the Avon and Gaspereau rivers. It was escorted by a brig of war under the command of Captain Pigot. Assuming that the vessels were the usual sloops and schooners of average size, they must have carried an average of fifty passengers each, plus stock and equipment.⁵⁰ The total cost of the Rogers and Pigot ships was about £1500.⁵¹

The Cornwallis settlers landed at what was Boudreau's Bank, now Starr's Point, and the Horton settlers at Horton Landing. At first they lived in tents and temporary shelter. Almost at once they held Town Meetings, or assemblies of grantees, at which the usual lot layers and other officials such as clerk, constable, and herdsmen were appointed. The lot layers divided the land which was drawn for in the usual way. Most heads of families received the regular share of 500 acres, but some were granted a share and a half, and a few a half-share. Each had a town lot and a portion of marshland, upland, and woodland. Soon all were busy building houses and tilling the soil.⁵²

An outstanding characteristic of the Planter settlements in Horton and Cornwallis was the central community of Town Plot. It was an inheritance from both old and new England, and was used here also for purposes of defense, trade, and social life. At Annapolis there was a fort near the settlements, but in Horton and Cornwallis it was necessary to construct a palisaded area, and it was desirable to have the families as near to it as possible. As danger from the Indians ceased, the Planters found it more convenient to live on the land they tilled. Thus the present community system replaced the town plot. To consolidate their holdings, the owners began a series of sales and exchanges in the process of which the shrewd often obtained the best lands.⁵³ Farming continued for some time extensive rather than intensive, with younger sons still seeking land. This resulted in the divisions of the original grants, and the occupation of ungranted areas west of the settlements. In the 19th and early 20th centuries many sons and daughters of Planters found their way back to

49 Morris to Lawrence, *op. cit.* Morris suggested that the six ships made a second voyage to bring many who were waiting at New London.

50 The estimate of 1100 people in the flotilla fits with a census taken in 1763-64 when there were 122 families or 689 people in Horton, and 125 families or 656 people in Cornwallis.

51 See I. G. MacKinnon, *Settlements and Churches in Nova Scotia* (Montreal 1930).

52 Eaton, *op. cit.* Grants to those who settled in the two townships were issued in 1761. The Horton committee was William Welch, Lebbeus Harris, and Samuel Read. For Cornwallis the committee was Eliakim Tupper, Stephen West and Jonathan Newcomb.

53 Harriet B. Weld, *The History and Genealogy of the Borden Family* (1899), 122.

New England. Here their descendants still reside.

The Rhode Island Planters came to Falmouth in four ships of which two were the *Sally* commanded by Captain Jonathan Lovett, and the *Lydia* commanded by Captain Samuel Toby.⁵⁴ The former carried 35 passengers and the latter 23. The cost to each passenger was 25 shillings.⁵⁵ Among the leaders of this group were John Hicks, Henry Denny Denson, and Shubal Dimock.⁵⁶ There were 73 families in all. Almost at once those who settled on the east side of the river wished to have their own township, and so Newport was established. In Falmouth, more than in any of the other settlements, the town meeting was used as the means of dividing the land and of regulating almost every activity of the community, even to the distribution of the Acadian ruins, the cutting of firewood, the earmarks for the cattle, and the use of the commons for grazing.

By the end of the year 1760, Annapolis County had a new Massachusetts, Kings County a new Connecticut, and the present Hants County a new Rhode Island. The whole Valley was a new New England, with a population of nearly 2000 people.⁵⁷

Governor Lawrence was so well pleased with his new settlers that he wrote Thomas Hancock he was prepared to receive further applications for land.⁵⁸ He visited the Minas settlements during the summer and found contentment and activity everywhere. His death on October 19th left the work well advanced, but incomplete. It was continued by acting Governor Jonathan Belcher. Today after two hundred years many Planter descendants are still in the area, some residing on the original grants. Other descendants have made places for themselves in politics, business, the professions, and in the church. Their contributions to Nova Scotia, Canada, and the United States justify the policy that brought the New England Planters to the beautiful Vale of Annapolis.⁵⁹

54 Lovett was the captain of one of the ships that carried the Acadians into exile.

55 R.G. Huling, "The Rhode Island Emigration to Nova Scotia," *Narragansett Historical Register*, VII, 1899, 92 ff.

56 Hick's associations with Falmouth have been given. Denson was active in the early life of the settlement. In 1775 he was distributor of arms and ammunition in Kings County. Eaton, 431. Dimock was a dissenting preacher who emigrated to escape persecution.

57 A.W.H. Eaton, *Americana* (March 1915).

58 *Boston Gazette*, 28 July 1760.

59 See *Canada and Its Provinces*, XIII, 110.