



This illustration from 1848 shows habitants playing cards. What details about daily life does it show you?

### **Acadians**

Acadia was the name for one of the first permanent French settlements in North America. It included the areas that became Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick. Acadians are the descendants of these first settlers.

In the 1600s and early 1700s, Acadians had strong communities based on farming and fishing. During the years of war between France and England, the area where Acadians lived changed hands a few times, until it finally came under British control. The British made the Acadians leave the area because they didn't trust them to stay loyal to Britain. In the *Grand Dérangement* of 1755 (known in English as "the Expulsion"), between 8000 and 10 000 Acadians were forced to leave their homes. Many were either shipped to British colonies farther south or imprisoned. Others hid by going to live deeper in the woods. Some moved to Lower Canada (later called Canada East) or to the French communities on the coast of Newfoundland. Some went as far as France or the French community of Louisiana. Families were broken up, and historians estimate that 50 per cent of the Acadians who were forced from their homes died as a result of the Expulsion.

In time, Acadians were allowed to return to British North America. Many did choose to return—they had faced discrimination in the British colonies farther south because they were French and Roman Catholic. However, their good farmland was now owned by British settlers. They had to start over as fishers or loggers. Yet even this was difficult because the fishing industry was controlled by English merchants. By the mid-1800s, Acadian communities were starting to build up again. But many people were still living with great poverty.