

Mr. J. Bambrick of Glenroy near Mt. Stewart wrote of the Acadians in 1901 as follows. They were an industrious people. Only located here a few years, they left traces of great improvement in the old clearings and the diked marshes.

In the past forty years the author has spent many hours observing the remains of the structures that they created on the Mount Stewart marsh. This article is an attempt to put down the author's theory of the construction method used on the marsh and an attempt to explain the use the structures had to their builders.

A description of how they constructed their drainage system on the Mt. Stewart marsh would be as follows. They began by sealing off the marsh from the river by throwing up the clay off the shore to form a dike three or four feet high. The dike was then sodded with marsh sod top to bottom. In two or three years when the sod took good root, the dikes would be practically indestructible.

When they were building the dike they left an opening where they thought a drain could bring water from the marsh. Probably some of the material excavated during ditching would be used in the sodding, the rest for other purposes.

They used the larger tidal creeks above Mt. Stewart as the main drainage system of the surrounding marsh. They dug drains in the marsh so they emptied into the creeks above an abideau, which was placed by using good judgment, not too far up the creek, so there would be a reservoir large enough to hold the run-off between tides.

The abideau was an ingenious device, a box like structure open at both ends fitted with a clapet or swing valve that shut when the water tried to get back through the abideau when the tide was rising. When the tide receded the clapet opened and the impounded fresh water drained through the abideau into the lower creek. The abideau was held in place by a bridge like structure made of marsh sod, poles, brush, and stakes.

In order to do their everyday farm work on the marsh which included the maintenance of dikes, ditches, abideaux, and roads, it would have been very convenient to use the abideau sites on the creeks to cross to the other side.

Botanical and other evidence tends to point out that a system of roads once serviced the marsh. The best place to look for a road on the creek is the place where the dikes end on the creeks. It is here that they placed the bridge like structure across the creek that held the abideau in place. The roads were built to each end of this structure.

Spotting evidence of Acadian work on the marsh is not an exact science. Ditches are best seen just after the ice leaves the marsh and the vegetation is pressed into the marsh making them visible. Roads and dikes are noticed by their elevation above the marsh, by botanical clues such as a line of standing vegetation or an old field type of vegetation growing on raised places on the marsh and foreign to the surroundings.

One area of dike at the mouth of St. Andrews creek has been obliterated by wave action generated by the prevailing south-west winds of the warmer seasons. The wind builds the waves high in the near mile stretch from the railroad bridge fronting on St. Andrews creek. Other places above Mt. Stewart have not suffered similar damage because of the way the shore runs or the

