

STATION A: FRANCE IN THE NEW WORLD

The French colonized North America later than the Spanish; the first French colony, Acadia, was founded in 1604, and Quebec was founded in 1608. In the ensuing decades, the French slowly established more colonies along the St. Lawrence River and in other areas where they traded, but in general, French settlement occurred at a slower rate than Spanish. By 1660 there were about 3000 people living in New France.

At first, French settlement was based upon the fur trade and, to a lesser extent, fishing. Fur hats were immensely popular in Europe in the seventeenth century, and the Baltic fur market had dried up. Trade with the Native Americans gave the French a seemingly endless supply of furs. The trading relationship between the French and the Native Americans was an equitable one: the French needed the Native Americans to provide and cure the furs, while the Native Americans needed the French for European items like metal pots. The new land was also quite unforgiving, and different from the moderate European climate. The Native Americans were therefore very useful to the French settlers, as they taught them how to survive. In comparison with the British, who sought control over their Native American allies, the French remained on equal terms and were therefore a more attractive ally.

All French colonies were under the king's direct control, although in practice this was only nominal because of the distance involved. In practice, each French colony was under the jurisdiction of the governor-general, while the *intendant* was the chief administrator. The colonies operated under French law, called the Code Civil.

As in New Spain, the French colony's settlement patterns were meant to mimic conditions in the mother country. The crown leased large plots of land to local lords, or *seigneurs*, as well as to the Catholic Church, which played a large role in the colony. The majority of settlers rented land from these large landowners; this was called the *seigneurial* system. After the land was surveyed, it was parceled out to settlers in carefully measured and roughly equal linear pieces. In New France, the land was usually in the shape of a long, thin rectangle, and one side bordered the St. Lawrence River.

There were, however, some differences between life in France and life in the new colony. Class distinctions were not as sharp; there were fewer people, and everyone was to a certain extent reliant on others for survival, so rigid distinctions made little sense. It was easier, for instance, for commoners to access the legal system. Since the plots of land given out were relatively large, moreover, settlers had a good chance of becoming prosperous. Finally, the nobility never became established in New France.

New France also had a large gender imbalance – in the 1660s, the ratio of men to women was six to one. Since the first groups of colonists were overwhelmingly men, the colonists did not reproduce as quickly as the English colonists did, as we will see shortly. The gender imbalance was eventually corrected, at least to some extent, when Louis XIV sent boatloads of women to the new colony. By the 1700s, the population of New France had increased to around 15,000.

French colonies in the Caribbean were established on a much different basis than New France – like the Dutch and Spanish, the French established plantation-based colonies there for sugar and food. The most important French colony was Saint-Domingue, modern-day Haiti. Other colonies included Martinique, which is still a French territory today. As in the Dutch and Spanish colonies, French sugar plantations relied heavily on the labor of African slaves.



STATION B: BRITISH NORTH AMERICA



English colonies in British North America – what would become the United States– followed two very different settlement models. In the southern colonies in Virginia and the Carolinas, the colonies used a plantation model. The settlements of New England and the Middle Colonies – Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and Delaware – in contrast, operated on a family-farm model. Both drew large numbers of colonists in their first century; by 1700, the English colonies had a combined 100,000 inhabitants.

Like the French, the English hoped that they would find gold and silver in their American colonies, as the Spanish had. The Virginia Company was founded in 1606 on this premise, but the colonists found no precious metals when they arrived. Soon the colonists began growing tobacco, which they quickly produced in enormous quantities. By 1617 the settlers were already producing 70,000 pounds of tobacco a year; on the eve of the 1776 American Revolution, production had reached 100,000,000 pounds a year.

Tobacco was very labor intensive: it took nine months of work each year to cultivate. Plantation owners therefore relied on indentured servitude and African slave labor to do the work. To attract laborers to the new colony, the “headright” system was established. Anyone who paid the passage of a worker received 50 acres of land. Settlers who could afford to pay for their own passage received the land for themselves, but they were in the minority; 75–85 percent of migrants were sold into servitude to reimburse the costs of the voyage. In those cases, the people who paid each migrant’s passage to Virginia received the 50 acres. This created an opportunity for enterprising Englishmen to profit from the labor situation, if they could find men to send to North America. They often did so by making false promises of riches, by trickery, or even by abduction. Indentured servitude carried great risk. From 1607 to 1624, 80 percent of the colonists in Virginia died; Indian raids and the effects of the strange new ecosystem were among the many perils of life in the Americas. Nonetheless, the strong demand for tobacco in Europe kept the colony running, and the population grew quickly. In the 1650s three more colonies were established, and by 1660 there were 24,000 colonists – eight times the population of New France.

Settlement in New England differed from the Virginian model. Its focus on the family farm and, especially, on town life, resembled French and Spanish settlement patterns in many ways. The Puritans who settled in Massachusetts built their settlements around the center of the town. As in the early Spanish colonies, pastureland was located outside these clustered settlements. Each family received 100–150 acres to farm, though families often preserved much of the land to be divided among descendants. Daily life in the colony revolved around religion and family. The numbers of men and women were more balanced than in any of the other European colonies, as settlers were more likely to be whole families. Twenty thousand settlers arrived in New England in the 1630s and 1640s, and as towns grew they began to operate as trading hubs. Boston, the first settlement in the colony, quickly thrived as a seaport, and the settlers began to move westward and establish other colonies.

As in New France, Native American populations helped the English settlers stay alive; Native Americans gave supplies to the new arrivals and taught them to survive. Unlike the French, however, the English did not treat the Native Americans well in return. In 1622, an attack by the Powhatan, who had previously controlled the land under cultivation, killed 347 colonists. English reprisals to Powhatan attacks eventually resulted in the near-elimination of the tribe by 1650. In New England, the Native Americans and colonists were almost constantly at war.

STATION C: FRENCH & INDIAN WAR

The French and Indian War was a major war fought in the American Colonies between 1754 and 1763. The British gained significant territory in North America as a result of the war.

Who fought in the French and Indian War?

From the name of the war, you would probably guess that the French fought the Indians during the French and Indian War. Actually, the main enemies in the war were the French and the British. Both sides had American Indian allies. The French allied with several tribes including the Shawnee, Lenape, Ojibwa, Ottawa, and the Algonquin peoples. The British allied with the Iroquois, Catawba, and the Cherokee (for a time).

How is it different from the Seven Years War?

The French and Indian war is considered part of the Seven Years War. The Seven Years War was fought throughout much of the world. The portion of the Seven Years War that was fought in North America is called the French and Indian War.

Where was it fought?

The war was fought mostly in the northeast along the border between the British colonies and the French Colonies of New France.

Leading up to the War

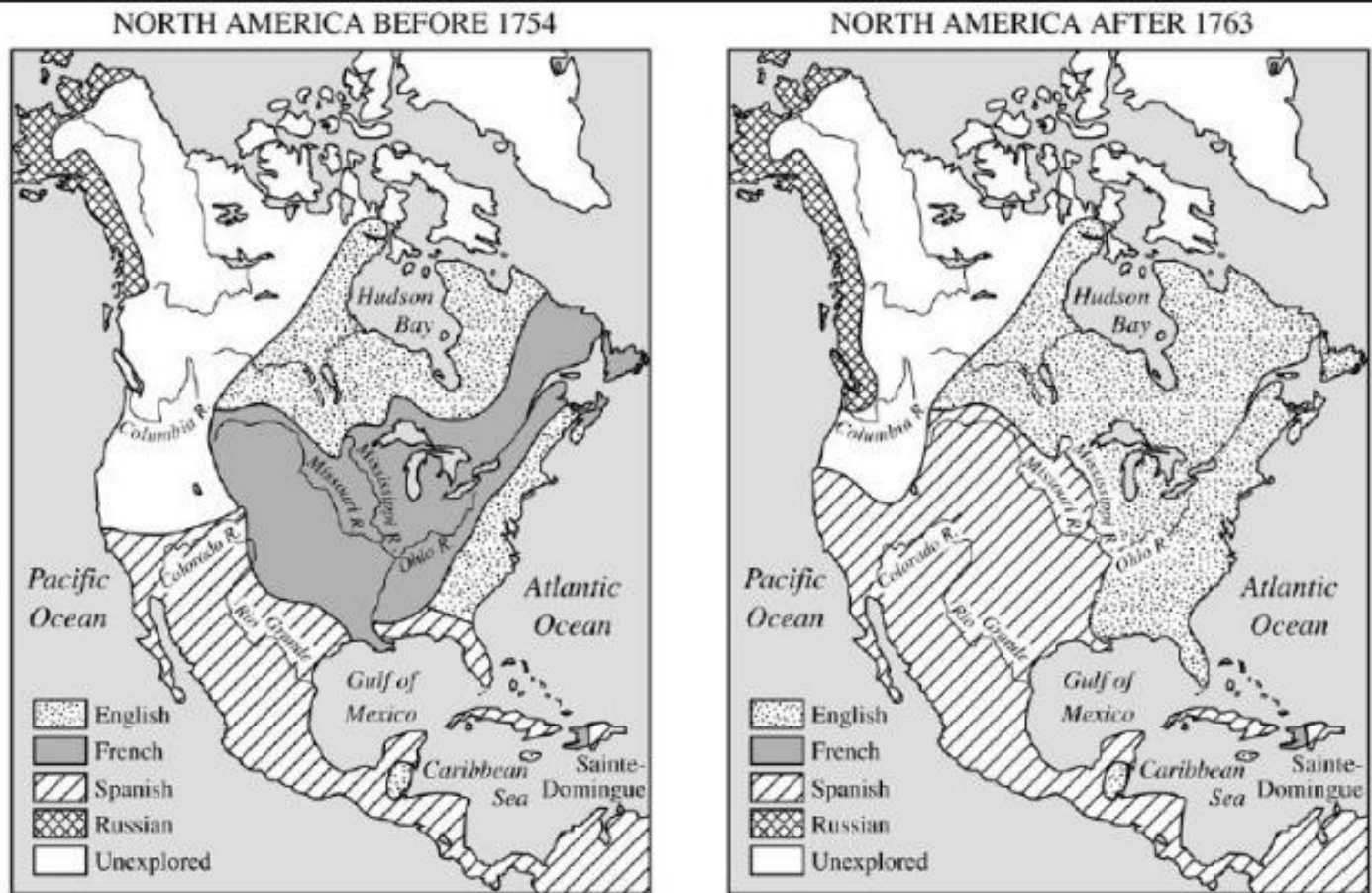
As the American colonies began to expand to the west, they came into conflict with the French. The first real conflict began when the French moved into the Ohio country and built Fort Duquesne on the Ohio River (where the city of Pittsburgh is today). It was over the construction of this fort that the first battle of the war, the Battle of Jumonville Glen, took place on May 28, 1754.

Major Battles and Events

- General Braddock at Fort Duquesne (1755) - British General Braddock led 1500 men to take Fort Duquesne. They were ambushed and soundly defeated by French and Indian soldiers.
- Battle of Fort Oswego (1756) - The French captured the British Fort Oswego and took 1,700 prisoners captive.
- Massacre at Fort William Henry (1757) - The French took Fort William Henry. Many British soldiers were massacred as France's Indian allies violated the terms of the British surrender and killed around 150 British soldiers.
- Battle of Quebec (1759) - The British claimed a decisive victory over the French and occupied Quebec City.
- Fall of Montreal (1760) - The city of Montreal falls to the British led by Field Marshal Jeffery Amherst. The fighting is nearly over in the American colonies.

End of the War and Results

The French and Indian War ended on February 10, 1763 with the signing of the Treaty of Paris. France was forced to give up all of its North American territory. Britain gained all of the land east of the Mississippi River and Spain gained the land west of the Mississippi.



Consequences

The French and Indian War had some major consequences on the future of the British colonies in America. The war was expensive for the British government to fight. In order to pay for it, they issued taxes on the colonies. The British government considered this fair as they were protecting the interests of the colonies. The colonies, however, felt that they should not be taxed unless they had representation in the British government.

Also, this war was the first time that the colonies united together to fight a common enemy. They built up colonial militias and gained confidence in their fighting abilities. In the end, the events of the French and Indian War played a major role leading up to the American Revolution.

Read more at: http://www.ducksters.com/history/colonial_america/french_and_indian_war.php