

## Colonial Wars in 18th Century North America

### I. France in Canada

#### A. France was late in coming to the New World

1. Much internal strife during 1500s between Catholics and Huguenots (Calvinists)  
-- St. Bartholemew's Day, 1572 -- 10,000 Huguenots executed, men, women & children
2. **Edict of Nantes** (1598): Granted limited toleration to French Protestants
  - a. Religious wars ceased
  - b. France blossomed into most feared power in 17th c. Europe led by Louis XIV

#### B. French established **Quebec** in 1608 (a year after Jamestown)

1. Located at the head of the St. Lawrence River
2. Founded by **Samuel de Champlain** ("Father of New France")
  - a. Entered friendship with local Huron Indians, the enemies of the **Iroquois**
  - b. Significance: Iroquois, in retaliation, later kept the French from expanding into the Ohiovalley, ravaged French settlements, and allied with the British against the French.

#### C. Government

1. Eventually, the crown ruled the region autocratically (after commercial ventures failed)  
-- No popularly elected assemblies or trial by jury.
2. French population in New France grew very slowly -- only 6,000 whites by 1750

#### D. New France expands in North America

1. Of the European powers, the French were the most successful in creating an effective trading relationship with the Indians.
  - a. British settlers sought to remove or exterminate them.
  - b. Spanish sought to Christianize them and subdued them in missions.
  - c. The French became great gift givers (the key to getting on with Indians who based their inter-tribal relationships on gift giving) during last two decades of the

17<sup>th</sup> century.

- i. Trade not seen as a transaction or contract (like in Europe).
  - ii. Trade seen by Indians as a continuing process.
  - iii. When one group stopped trading w/ another, it was tantamount to declaring war.
2. Beaver trade led to exploration of much of North America:
    - a. Heavy demand for fur in European fashion.
    - b. **coueurs de bois** (runners of the woods) were rough frontiersmen heavily involved in fur trading.
    - c. French seamen - *voyageurs* -- recruited Indians into the fur trade
  3. Jesuits: Catholic Missionaries who sought to convert Indians and save them from the fur trappers.
    - a. Some were brutally killed by Indians (although in the eyes of Indians, Jesuits held up best to torture and were thus more respected).
    - b. Played a vital role as explorers and geographers
  4. Other explorers
    - a. **Antoine Cadillac** -- founded Detroit in 1701  
-- Aimed to keep English settlers out of the Ohio Valley
    - b. **Robert de La Salle** -- Sailed from Quebec, down through the Great Lakes, and down the Mississippi River in 1682 with the help of Indian guides.
      - i. Sought to prevent Spanish expansion into Gulf of Mexico region

- ii. Coined the name "Louisiana" in honor of Louis XIV
  - 5. French establish posts in the Mississippi region (New Orleans most important—1718)
    - a. Attempt to block Spanish expansion into the Gulf of Mexico
    - b. Forts and trading posts in Illinois country: Kaskaskia, Cahokia, & Vincennes
      - Large amounts of grain sent down the Mississippi River for shipment to the West Indies and Europe
- II. Clash of Empires: English, French, & Spanish
- A. Four world wars between 1688 and 1763
1. King William's War (1689-1697) -- and Queen Anne's War (1702-1713)
    - a. British colonials fought French *coureurs de bois* and Indian allies (except Mohawks of the Iroquois confederacy)
    - b. **Treaty of Utrecht** (1713) ended colonial wars for nearly three decades.
    - c. In American colonies, a generation of peace ensued; "salutary neglect"
      - i. Whig prime minister, Robert Walpole, believed if the colonies were left alone to run their own affairs with minimal interference, they would produce more wealth and commerce, prosper, and cause less trouble.
      - ii. England would simply provide peace, protection, commerce, ensure law and order and domestic tranquility, and send more British immigrants to America to increase numbers of British customers.
  2. King George's War (1744-1748) (War of Austrian Succession; War of Jenkin's Ear)
    - a. Spain again allied with France against Britain.
    - b. New Englanders again invaded New France and took the strategically important city of **Louisbourg** commanding the approaches of St. Lawrence River.
    - e. Peace Treaty of 1748
      - i. England gave Louisbourg back to the French in order to help negotiations for a cease-fire in the European war.
      - ii. British colonists were furious; felt vulnerable from the North.
  3. **French & Indian War** (1754-1763 -- Seven Years' War) -- most important of the colonial wars.
    - a. Main issue was the Ohio Valley
      - i. British were pushing west into it; wary of French influence in North America
      - ii. French needed to retain it to link Canadian holdings with the lower Mississippi valley & Caribbean.
    - b. **Washington's Ohio Mission** -- Battle near **Fort Duquesne** -- May, 1754
      - i. Lt. Col. George Washington sent by Virginia gov't to forks of Ohio River to prevent French from building fort there; hoped instead to build a British fort.
      - ii. Washington defeated and forced to surrender his entire command but allowed to leave with his army intact.
      - iii. In effect, Washington triggered a world war.
    - c. British retaliated by clamping down in Nova Scotia
      - i. Uprooted 4,000 Nova Scotians and scattered them throughout the continent including Louisiana.
      - ii. French-speaking Acadians became the descendants of modern day "Cajuns"
    - d. War widened into hitherto largest world war: 25,000 American colonials fought
    - e. **Albany Congress** (1754)
      - i. Board of Trade called leaders from all the colonies to meet in Albany

- to discuss Indian problem and meet with Iroquois.
  - ii. British sought to make Iroquois allies; gave many gifts (including guns)
    - Iroquois refused to commit themselves to the British
  - iii. Long-range purpose: greater colonial unity; strong defense against France.
  - f. **Albany Plan for Union**
    - i. Benjamin Franklin created plan for colonial home rule: dealt with defense and Indian affairs.
      - Adopted by delegates
      - Individual colonies rejected it: not enough independence
      - British rejected it: too much independence
    - ii. Franklin's cartoon: "Join, or Die"
  - g. British **General Braddock** defeated a few miles from Fort Duquesne by smaller French & Indian forces (1755)
  - h. British launched full-scale invasion of Canada in 1756 but failed.
  - i. **William Pitt** (The "Great Commoner") – became leader of British gov't
    - i. Very popular among the British people; his success in the war led to Ft. Duquesne being renamed Pittsburgh.
    - ii. Strategy: focus on France in North America in order to win the war.
  - j. **Battle of Quebec** (1760)
    - i. Pitt appointed **James Wolfe** to take Quebec
    - ii. British successful on the **Plains of Abraham** (near Quebec) but Wolfe & French commander **de Montcalm** were killed.
    - iii. One of most significant battles in British & American history.
  - k. **Peace of Paris (1763) – In effect, France was removed from North America.** (Technically, land west of Mississippi River still French but not yet settled.)
    - Great Britain emerged as the dominant power in North America and as the leading naval power in the world.
- III. Friction between the colonies and Britain during and after French and Indian War.
- A. Colonies emerged from the war with increased confidence in their military strength
    - Yet, colonial military leaders angry that American promotions limited in British army
  - B. British upset that American shippers traded with enemy ports of Sp. & Fr. W. Indies
    - 1. Enemy Indians were aided by increased foodstuffs
    - 2. British forbade export of all supplies from New England & Middle colonies during last year of the war.
    - 3. Some colonials refused to supply troops: saw economic gain as more important than loyalty to Britain.
      - Only later agreed to commit troops when Pitt offered to substantially reimburse colonies.
  - C. American westward colonial expansion increased significantly after the war
    - 1. French barrier west of the Appalachians was removed
    - 2. Spanish and Indian threats removed in many areas
    - 3. Settlers no longer as dependent on British protection in the frontier.
  - D. **Pontiac's Rebellion** (1763)
    - 1. Indians in Ohio Valley region angered at British treatment of Indians during the last years of the French and Indian War.
    - 2. **Chief Pontiac**, the Ottawa chief in northern Michigan, refused to surrender his lands

- to the British although France (their ally in the war) had lost and were now gone.
3. Chief Pontiac led an Indian alliance against whites in the Ohio Valley & Great Lakes region in 1763
    - a. 9 of 11 British forts taken; several wiped out.
    - b. Perhaps 2,000 lives lost during first 6 mos. of conflict, many more driven from their homes on the frontier back to more settled areas.
    - c. It took British 18 months to bring the rebellion under control.
  4. British retaliated with germ warfare: blankets infected with smallpox distributed among the Native Americans
  5. Rebellion subdued in October, 1763

#### **E. Proclamation of 1763**

1. In response to Pontiac's rebellion, George III signed an edict creating royal colonies in all newly acquired lands in the Treaty of Paris.
2. Prohibited colonials to move west of the Appalachians
  - a. Line drawn from Canada to Florida along the crest of the Appalachians intended to be temporary measure..
  - b. British aim: Settle land disputes with Indians fairly to prevent more bloody episodes like Pontiac's uprising and organize eventual settlement and defense
3. Colonials infuriated: viewed edict as being permanent.
  - a. Many veterans had fought in the war and felt betrayed
  - b. Land speculators argued that the land was a birthright of British citizens.
4. Colonials generally ignored the Proclamation

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