



# European Nations Settle North America

## MAIN IDEA

**EMPIRE BUILDING** Several European nations fought for control of North America, and England emerged victorious.

## WHY IT MATTERS NOW

The English settlers in North America left a legacy of law and government that guides the United States today.

## TERMS & NAMES

- New France
- Jamestown
- Pilgrims
- Puritans
- New Netherland
- French and Indian War
- Metacom

**SETTING THE STAGE** Spain's successful colonization efforts in the Americas did not go unnoticed. Other European nations, such as England, France, and the Netherlands, soon became interested in obtaining their own valuable colonies. The Treaty of Tordesillas, signed in 1494, had divided the newly discovered lands between Spain and Portugal. However, other European countries ignored the treaty. They set out to build their own empires in the Americas. This resulted in a struggle for North America.

## Competing Claims in North America

Magellan's voyage showed that ships could reach Asia by way of the Pacific Ocean. Spain claimed the route around the southern tip of South America. Other European countries hoped to find an easier and more direct route to the Pacific. If it existed, a northwest trade route through North America to Asia would become highly profitable. Not finding the route, the French, English, and Dutch instead established colonies in North America.

**Explorers Establish New France** The early French explorers sailed west with dreams of reaching the East Indies. One explorer was Giovanni da Verrazzano (VEHR•uh•ZAHN•noh), an Italian in the service of France. In 1524, he sailed to North America in search of a sea route to the Pacific. While he did not find the route, Verrazzano did discover what is today New York harbor. Ten years later, the Frenchman Jacques Cartier (kahr•TYAY) reached a gulf off the eastern coast of Canada that led to a broad river. Cartier named it the St. Lawrence. He followed it inward until he reached a large island dominated by a mountain. He named the island Mont Real (Mount Royal), which later became known as Montreal. In 1608, another French explorer, Samuel de Champlain, sailed up the St. Lawrence with about 32 colonists. They founded Quebec, which became the base of France's colonial empire in North America, known as **New France**.

Then the French penetrated the North American continent. In 1673, French Jesuit priest Jacques Marquette and trader Louis Joliet explored the Great Lakes and the upper Mississippi River. Nearly 10 years later, Sieur de La Salle explored the lower Mississippi. He claimed the entire river valley for France. He named it Louisiana in honor of the French king, Louis XIV. By the early 1700s, New France covered much of what is now the midwestern United States and eastern Canada.

## TAKING NOTES

**Clarifying** Use a chart to record information about early settlements.

Name of Settlement	General Location
New France	
New Netherland	
Massachusetts Bay	

**A Trading Empire** France's North American empire was immense. But it was sparsely populated. By 1760, the European population of New France had grown to only about 65,000. A large number of French colonists had no desire to build towns or raise families. These settlers included Catholic priests who sought to convert Native Americans. They also included young, single men engaged in what had become New France's main economic activity, the fur trade. Unlike the English, the French were less interested in occupying territories than they were in making money off the land. **A**

**MAIN IDEA**

**Summarizing**  
**A** Why were France's North American holdings so sparsely populated?

## The English Arrive in North America

The explorations of the Spanish and French inspired the English. In 1606, a company of London investors received from King James a charter to found a colony in North America. In late 1606, the company's three ships, and more than 100 settlers, pushed out of an English harbor. About four months later, in 1607, they reached the coast of Virginia. The colonists claimed the land as theirs. They named the settlement **Jamestown** in honor of their king.

**The Settlement at Jamestown** The colony's start was disastrous. The settlers were more interested in finding gold than in planting crops. During the first few years, seven out of every ten people died of hunger, disease, or battles with the Native Americans.

Despite their nightmarish start, the colonists eventually gained a foothold in their new land. Jamestown became England's first permanent settlement in North America. The colony's outlook improved greatly after farmers there discovered tobacco. High demand in England for tobacco turned it into a profitable cash crop.

**Puritans Create a "New England"** In 1620, a group known as **Pilgrims** founded a second English colony, Plymouth, in Massachusetts. Persecuted for their religious beliefs in England, these colonists sought religious freedom. Ten years later, a group known as **Puritans** also sought religious freedom from England's Anglican Church. They established a larger colony at nearby Massachusetts Bay.

▼ Henry Hudson's ship arrives in the bay of New York on September 12, 1609.





The Puritans wanted to build a model community that would set an example for other Christians to follow. Although the colony experienced early difficulties, it gradually took hold. This was due in large part to the numerous families in the colony, unlike the mostly single, male population in Jamestown.

**The Dutch Found New Netherland** Following the English and French into North America were the Dutch. In 1609, Henry Hudson, an Englishman in the service of the Netherlands, sailed west. He was searching for a northwest sea route to Asia. Hudson did not find a route. He did, however, explore three waterways that were later named for him—the Hudson River, Hudson Bay, and Hudson Strait.

The Dutch claimed the region along these waterways. They established a fur trade with the Iroquois Indians. They built trading posts along the Hudson River at Fort Orange (now Albany) and on Manhattan Island. Dutch merchants formed the Dutch West India Company. In 1621, the Dutch government granted the company permission to colonize the region and expand the fur trade. The Dutch holdings in North America became known as **New Netherland**.

Although the Dutch company profited from its fur trade, it was slow to attract Dutch colonists. To encourage settlers, the colony opened its doors to a variety of peoples. Gradually more Dutch, as well as Germans, French, Scandinavians, and other Europeans, settled the area. **B**

**Colonizing the Caribbean** During the 1600s, the nations of Europe also colonized the Caribbean. The French seized control of present-day Haiti, Guadeloupe, and Martinique. The English settled Barbados and Jamaica. In 1634, the Dutch captured what are now the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba from Spain.

On these islands, the Europeans built huge cotton and sugar plantations. These products, although profitable, demanded a large and steady supply of labor. Enslaved Africans eventually would supply this labor.

## The Struggle for North America

As they expanded their settlements in North America, the nations of France, England, and the Netherlands battled each other for colonial supremacy.

**The English Oust the Dutch** To the English, New Netherland separated their northern and southern colonies. In 1664, the English king, Charles II, granted his brother, the Duke of York, permission to drive out the Dutch. When the duke's fleet arrived at New Netherland, the Dutch surrendered without firing a shot. The Duke of York claimed the colony for England and renamed it New York.

With the Dutch gone, the English colonized the Atlantic coast of North America. By 1750, about 1.2 million English settlers lived in 13 colonies from Maine to Georgia.

**England Battles France** The English soon became hungry for more land for their colonial population. So they pushed farther west into the continent. By doing so, they collided with France's North American holdings. As their colonies expanded, France and England began to interfere with each other. It seemed that a major conflict was on the horizon.

In 1754 a dispute over land claims in the Ohio Valley led to a war between the British and French on the North

### MAIN IDEA

#### Contrasting

**B** How were the Dutch and French colonies different from the English colonies in North America?

## History *in* Depth

### Pirates

The battle for colonial supremacy occurred not only on land, but also on the sea. Acting on behalf of their government, privately owned armed ships, known as privateers, attacked merchant ships of enemy nations and sank or robbed them.

Also patrolling the high seas were pirates. They attacked ships for their valuables and did not care what nation the vessels represented.

One of the best-known pirates was Edward B. Teach, whose prominent beard earned him the nickname Blackbeard. According

to one account, Blackbeard attempted to frighten his victims by sticking "lighted matches under his hat, which appeared on both sides of his face and eyes, naturally fierce and wild."





**GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Maps**

- Region** Which nation claimed the largest area of the present-day United States in 1754?
- Place** How did Britain's North American empire change by 1763?

American continent. The conflict became known as the **French and Indian War**. The war became part of a larger conflict known as the Seven Years' War. Britain and France, along with their European allies, also battled for supremacy in Europe, the West Indies, and India.

In North America, the British colonists, with the help of the British Army, defeated the French in 1763. The French surrendered their North American holdings. As a result of the war, the British seized control of the eastern half of North America.

## Native Americans Respond

As in Mexico and South America, the arrival of Europeans in the present-day United States had a great impact on Native Americans. European colonization brought mostly disaster for the lands' original inhabitants.

**A Strained Relationship** French and Dutch settlers developed a mostly cooperative relationship with the Native Americans. This was due mainly to the mutual benefits of the fur trade. Native Americans did most of the trapping and then traded the furs to the French for such items as guns, hatchets, mirrors, and beads. The Dutch also cooperated with Native Americans in an effort to establish a fur-trading enterprise.

The groups did not live together in complete harmony. Dutch settlers fought with various Native American groups over land claims and trading rights. For the most part, however, the French and Dutch colonists lived together peacefully with their North American hosts. **C**

**MAIN IDEA**

**Analyzing Issues**

**C** Why were the Dutch and French able to coexist in relative peace with the Native Americans?



The same could not be said of the English. Early relations between English settlers and Native Americans were cooperative. However, they quickly worsened over the issues of land and religion. Unlike the French and Dutch, the English sought to populate their colonies in North America. This meant pushing the natives off their land. The English colonists seized more land for their population—and to grow tobacco.

**MAIN IDEA**

**Identifying Problems**

**D** Why did the issues of land and religion cause strife between Native Americans and settlers?

Religious differences also heightened tensions. The English settlers considered Native Americans heathens, people without a faith. Over time, many Puritans viewed Native Americans as agents of the devil and as a threat to their godly society. Native Americans developed a similarly harsh view of the European invaders. **D**

**Settlers and Native Americans Battle** The hostility between the English settlers and Native Americans led to warfare. As early as 1622, the Powhatan tribe attacked colonial villages around Jamestown and killed about 350 settlers. During the next few years, the colonists struck back and massacred hundreds of Powhatan.

One of the bloodiest conflicts between colonists and Native Americans was known as King Philip’s War. It began in 1675 when the Native American ruler **Metacom** (also known as King Philip) led an attack on colonial villages throughout Massachusetts. In the months that followed, both sides massacred hundreds of victims. After a year of fierce fighting, the colonists defeated the natives. During the 17th century, many skirmishes erupted throughout North America.

**Natives Fall to Disease** More destructive than the Europeans’ weapons were their diseases. Like the Spanish in Central and South America, the Europeans who settled North America brought with them several diseases. The diseases devastated the native population in North America.

In 1616, for example, an epidemic of smallpox ravaged Native Americans living along the New England coast. The population of one tribe, the Massachusett, dropped from 24,000 to 750 by 1631. From South Carolina to Missouri, nearly whole tribes fell to smallpox, measles, and other diseases.

One of the effects of this loss was a severe shortage of labor in the colonies. In order to meet their growing labor needs, European colonists soon turned to another group: Africans, whom they would enslave by the million

**SECTION 2 ASSESSMENT**

**TERMS & NAMES** 1. For each term or name, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- New France
- Jamestown
- Pilgrims
- Puritans
- New Netherland
- French and Indian War
- Metacom

**USING YOUR NOTES**

2. What did these settlements have in common?

Name of Settlement	General Location	Reasons Settled
New France		
New Netherland		
Massachusetts Bay		

**MAIN IDEAS**

3. What was a basic difference between French and English attitudes about the land they acquired in North America?
4. What was the main result of the French and Indian War?
5. What were some of the results for Native Americans of European colonization of North America?

**CRITICAL THINKING & WRITING**

6. **MAKING INFERENCES** What may have been one reason the English eventually beat the French in North America?
7. **DRAWING CONCLUSIONS** What need drove the English farther west into the North American continent?
8. **COMPARING** In what ways did the colonies at Jamestown and Massachusetts Bay differ?
9. **WRITING ACTIVITY** **EMPIRE BUILDING** What were some of the grievances of Native Americans toward English colonists? Make a bulleted **list** of Native American complaints to display in the classroom.

**INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY INTERNET ACTIVITY**

Use the Internet to research French Cajun culture in Louisiana. Make a poster displaying your findings.

**INTERNET KEYWORD**  
Cajun