

V. The Colonial Wars, a.k.a. The French and Indian Wars (1689-1763)

A. New France

1. French colonization of North America began at Quebec in 1608 under the leadership of Samuel de Champlain.
2. Small numbers of traders and Catholic priests came to New France and began exploring the continent. They became the “coureurs de bois” (the runners of the woods). Looking for a passage *through* America to get to Asia, they soon discovered the Great Lakes and the rivers that lead to the Mississippi.
3. In 1682, Sieur LaSalle, a French explorer, was the first European to travel all the way down the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico.
4. France claimed the area he had explored and its southern portion was named “Louisiana,” in honor of the French king.
5. In terms of its area, French territory in America was very large, but it was not settled by nearly as many colonists as the Eastern seaboard had been by England.

B. Three Early Wars

1. As France and England fought wars back in Europe, so their colonists fought in America. Each time the war came to be known by the name of the English king at the time.
 - a) King William’s War (1689-1697)
 - b) Queen Anne’s War (1701-1714)
 - c) King George’s War (1740-1748)
2. Hundreds of colonists were killed each time, but no gains were made by either side. At each war's end, the situation returned to the *status quo ante bellum* (the way things were before the war).

C. The French and Indian War (1756-1763)

1. A major clash between the French and English was brewing after the first three wars, when their two sets of colonists both began to covet the Ohio River valley.
2. In 1754, battles occurred at the site of present-day Pittsburgh, where the French had erected Ft. Duquesne. These would be the first historical battles in which a young *major* George Washington would become an important military commander.
3. Washington would learn important lessons about war in the wilderness through his encounters with the French and their Indian allies, who refused to fight in a European way. The “guerilla” (small war) tactics they used included the method of targeting commanders instead of soldiers, in order to destroy the cohesion of their enemy’s formations. (Lessons such as these would serve Washington well in the coming *Revolutionary War*.)
4. Meanwhile, back in Europe, England and France were once again at war, and soon large numbers of English troops were in America to deal a final blow to France's ambition there.
5. In 1759, at the Battle of Quebec, two large European armies faced each other under the command of Frenchman the Marquis de Montcalm and Englishman General Wolfe. The English captured Quebec, and the rest of the French colonies were easy to take thereafter.
6. In 1763, France was almost completely ejected from America. It was allowed to keep only New Orleans and two small fishing islands. England now controlled North America almost entirely.

VI. Prelude to the Revolution

A. Britain's New Challenges

1. The country known as England became “Great Britain” in 1707, during Queen Anne's War. Today it includes four parts (England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland). Its people are known as British.
2. Britain had defeated France in the Colonial Wars, but now it faced two new challenges: 1) a much larger territory to manage, and 2) a very large debt to pay.
3. Also, the American colonies were now a part of a large British Empire that included territories on every major continent, including, most important, a growing empire in India. The British king was becoming the most powerful ruler in the world. The world, in fact, was starting to have a sufficiently connected as to have a center. It was becoming “*Anglo-centric.*”
4. In such an empire, each set of colonies was expected to know its place. It was expected to live up to the exact idea of colonization, which was that a colony was supposed to serve the mother country.
5. Looking upon his colonists in America as his servants in a quest for world power, the King of Great Britain, George III became more and more of a tyrant, raising new taxes and imposing new laws on them without a care for how this would affect them. However, his desire for more power ran into the obstacle of American leaders who had learned the story of liberty in ancient Greece & Rome, and in England itself...