

BRITISH COLONIAL RULE



Figure 4-1 The first Royal Coat of Arms for Canada was adopted in 1868, the year following Confederation. After a major revision in 1921, and a smaller change in 1957, the current design (to the left) was adopted in 1994. It is based on the design of the Royal Coat of Arms of the United Kingdom (to the right). What kind of story does Canada's coat of arms tell about Canada's history? What parts of Canada's history does it leave out?



Figure 4-2 *Process of Clearing the Town-plot at Stanley, Upper Canada, October 1834, by W. P. Kay, 1836.*



ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How did British colonial rule change from 1763 to 1867 and what was its impact on life in North America?

To explore this Essential Question, you will

- examine the challenges faced by Britain in governing Québec after the fall of Nouvelle-France and the various ways it tried to meet these challenges
- explore British North America's relationship with the Thirteen Colonies and then the United States
- examine how British policies toward First Nations began to shift from those of mutual benefit to increasing marginalization
- explore aspects of life in British North America during this period of enormous social, economic, and political change
- explore which conditions, people, and events contributed to—and worked against—the achievement of responsible government in Canada

GETTING STARTED

In the one hundred years following the fall of Nouvelle-France in 1760, Britain tried to consolidate and, where possible, extend its power in North America. However, its goals as a colonial power were often at odds with the goals of people living in North America: First Nations, **Canadiens** (French-speaking residents of Québec), residents of the Thirteen Colonies, and new British immigrants. Study the images on page 108 to answer the following questions:

- What symbolism is represented in Canada's coat of arms? What symbolism is not represented? What does the coat of arms say about Canada's history and values?
- The Latin words on the ribbon, *desiderantes meliorem patriam*, mean "desiring a better country." What do these words tell you about Canada's history? Who desired a better country? Why did people come to Canada?
- If Figure 4-2 can be said to represent life for many ordinary citizens in British North America during this period, how would you describe this life? How might it be seen as a "better life"?







KEY TERMS

Canadiens
sovereign
assimilation
Loyalists
veto
conscientious
objectors
impressment
oligarchy
clergy reserves
responsible
government
Patriotes
coalition
free trade

ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

- The relationship between First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples and non-Aboriginal peoples moved from autonomous co-existence to colonialism to the present stage of renegotiation and renewal.
- Canadian institutions and culture reflect Canada's history as a former colony of France and of Britain.
- French-English duality is rooted in Canada's history and is a constitutionally protected element of Canadian society.
- Canada's parliamentary system is based on the rule of law, representative democracy, and constitutional monarchy.

Thinking Historically

-  Establishing **historical significance**
-  Using primary-source **evidence**
-  Identifying **continuity and change**
-  Analyzing **cause and consequence**
-  Taking a **historical perspective**
-  Considering the **ethical dimensions** of history

GOVERNING THE PEOPLES OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA

In 1760, Britain's war with France was over in British North America. However, France did not formally cede Nouvelle-France to Britain until it signed the Treaty of Paris in 1763. In the meantime, the former French colony (officially named the Province of Québec in 1763) had a military government under the direction of James Murray, who had served under General James Wolfe at the Battle of the Plains of Abraham.

Unlike the British leaders who had expelled the Acadians in 1755, Murray took a lenient approach to the colony's French-speaking, Roman Catholic population. While peace negotiations continued in Europe, the citizens of Québec continued to worship and live according to their custom. Murray's policy was a practical approach. He had only about 1500 British soldiers to patrol and control 70 000 Canadiens.

In the first years after the fall of Nouvelle-France, mistrust governed the relationship between British leaders and the residents of Québec. The British were not sure whether the Canadien population could be relied upon if war was to break out again. To which country would Québec's population be loyal? Their loyalties were probably not with Britain, long

the rival of France. While Nouvelle-France no longer existed on paper, it certainly existed in the hearts and minds of the majority of citizens living in Québec. Over 150 years of history on the continent could not be erased by the results of the Seven Years' War. For their part, the Canadiens did not trust the new British rulers. They knew how the Acadians had been treated in 1755 and feared another expulsion. Church leaders and seigneurs feared a loss of power and influence.

Furthermore, the Seven Years' War had left Britain in debt and Québec's economy in disarray. Québec merchants could no longer trade with France and had to try developing contacts in Britain. Farms had been destroyed and many seigneurs returned to France. Many of the

Canadiens who remained had no choice—they could not afford to return to France. Moreover, many citizens of Nouvelle-France had been born in North America—France was not “home” to them anyway.

Some British entrepreneurs moved their businesses to Québec, and some British military officials bought land from departing French seigneurs. This small British population assumed they would control Québec's population and resources for their own benefit.



Figure 4-3 *A View of the Bishop's House with the Ruins as They Appear Going Up the Hill from the Lower to the Upper Town (Québec), by Richard Short, 1761.* Short had been part of the British force that attacked Québec in 1759. What are the benefits and potential problems with his perspective as a creator of this primary source?

THE OHIO VALLEY

How to handle its Canadian subjects was only one problem facing Britain. Another centred on the Ohio Valley and the First Nations who lived between there and the Great Lakes. Much of the most intensive fighting during the Seven Years' War had taken place in this region. Yet First Nations peoples had not been part of the negotiations for the Treaty of Paris and were never consulted about the decisions affecting their ancestral lands. First Nations in the Great Lakes region included the members of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Confederacy: the Kanienkehaka (Mohawk), Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca, and Tuscarora. First Nations in the Ohio Valley included the Delaware, Shawnee, Wyandot, Odawa, and Miami nations. Some of these First Nations had been forced to move to the Ohio Valley from their ancestral lands because of growing settlements in the Thirteen Colonies. These nations were not inclined to move again.

The French had built many trading posts in the area to consolidate their hold on the fur trade. They had treated First Nations as independent, **sovereign** nations and built alliances with them. The French maintained their alliances with regular gifts of guns, ammunition, and trade goods. First Nations expected the gifts in exchange for allowing the Europeans to use the land.

The British had a different approach. After the fall of Nouvelle-France, the British began to occupy French forts around the Great Lakes and in the Ohio Valley. The British assigned General Jeffrey Amherst to oversee their military and fur-trade interests. Britain wanted to consolidate its authority in the Ohio Valley by taking charge of the fur trade and controlling how and when the valley would be settled by colonists. Amherst viewed First Nations as conquered peoples (along with their allies, the French) and did not see any reason to distribute gifts. He viewed the gifts as bribes the British could not afford. Amherst also restricted trade in the Ohio Valley to those who received licences from British administrators. His policies caused hardship in many First Nations communities, which had come to depend on the fur trade and its system of gift distributions. Amherst viewed First Nations as a problem he would rather not deal with. During the summer of 1763, British forces gave two blankets and a handkerchief that they knew were infected with smallpox to two First Nations leaders. The disease spread among communities along the Ohio River.

A further concern regarding the Ohio Valley came from the Thirteen Colonies. Residents of the Thirteen Colonies had cheered the defeat of France and believed they could now settle in the Ohio Valley. The Thirteen Colonies had long felt constrained and contained by the French presence to the west. Ignoring Britain's efforts to control settlement in the area, Yankee land speculators began selling land near the Ohio Valley to settlers, who arrived to stake their claim.

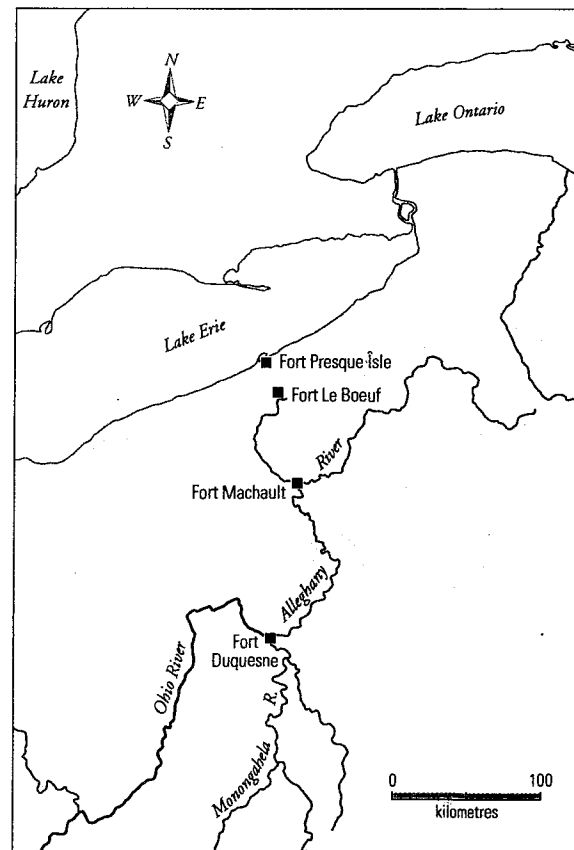
VOICES

Although you have conquered the French, you have not conquered us. We are not your slaves. These lakes, these woods, and mountains were left to us by our ancestors. They are our inheritance, and we will part with them to no one.

— Anishinaabe (Ojibwe/Saulteaux) Chief
Minavavana to the British

Figure 4-4 Strategic French Forts, Ohio Valley, 1763

The British were glad to take over French forts after the fall of Nouvelle-France. In particular, Fort Duquesne was strategically important for controlling the Ohio Valley, and was the focus of many military battles from its construction in 1754 until early in the nineteenth century.



PONTIAC'S RESISTANCE

Pontiac, an Odawa First Nation war chief, had fought as an ally of the French at the Battle of the Plains of Abraham. After the conquest of Nouvelle-France, he had tried to build alliances with the British, but without success. He saw his people suffering under British rule and decided to do something about it.

Under his leadership, First Nations from the Ohio Valley, around the Great Lakes, and in the Northwest united to fight the British, beginning in the summer of 1762. In 1763, the allied First Nations quickly overtook nine of twelve British forts in the regions north and west of the Thirteen Colonies. First Nations controlled all forts in the Ohio Valley except Fort Detroit, Fort Niagara, and Fort Pitt (which replaced Fort Duquesne in 1758). It seemed that Pontiac's plan to unite First Nations would succeed. Conflicts were over by the end of 1763 and peace negotiations began. In 1766, Pontiac, on behalf of the First Nations he represented, signed a peace treaty with the British at Fort Ontario. Pontiac agreed to allow the British to take back their forts, but he insisted that First Nations hunting grounds had to be protected from settlement. He also affirmed the First Nations position that the French had only been using First Nations land and that the French defeat did not mean Britain could take over First Nations land.



Figure 4-5 Pontiac, shown in this portrait by an unknown artist, supported a movement among some First Nations at this time that advocated a return to traditional ways and as little contact as possible with European colonists. Why do you think some First Nations people wanted to make this change?


THE ROYAL PROCLAMATION, 1763

Pontiac's Resistance had shown that First Nations were a threat to British control in North America. Britain decided that pacifying First Nations was the best alternative to more costly wars. To accomplish this, Britain issued the Royal Proclamation of 1763. The Royal Proclamation created a clear boundary between British colonies and lands reserved for First Nations. Britain hoped that by keeping colonists separate from First Nations, further conflicts over land could be avoided.

Colonists were forbidden to trespass on the land west of the Proclamation Line. Ownership of the lands reserved for First Nations could go only to the British Crown—individuals and companies could not claim the land. This provision was intended to ensure the slow and orderly settlement of the West. Under the Royal Proclamation, the plan was that, as it became necessary, Britain would negotiate with First Nations to reach treaties that would open up more land for colonial settlement. In so doing, Britain took control of this process, assuming that it, not First Nations or colonists, should decide when and where these negotiations should take place. In the meantime, Britain hoped that by restricting westward settlement, colonists in search of land would come north, to Québec, decreasing the Canadian majority and eventually forcing their **assimilation** into British colonial culture.

...SHAPING CANADA TODAY...

In 1996, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples reported that the Royal Proclamation of 1763 "portrays Indian nations as autonomous political entities, living under the protection of the Crown but retaining their own internal political authority." Some people see the Royal Proclamation as the basis for Aboriginal peoples' rights to land and self-government today.

 Britain wanted the Canadiens to become more British and its Thirteen Colonists to move north, not west. Why do you think Britain was unsuccessful in its goals?

THE FRENCH UNDER THE ROYAL PROCLAMATION

The Royal Proclamation also officially established the Province of Québec and gave French residents their first civil (not military) government since the conquest. French laws were abolished and, as in other parts of the British Empire, people had to take the *Serment du Test* in order to participate in government. The *Serment du Test* was an oath in which people swore they were a member of the Anglican Church. The *Serment du Test* ensured that Roman Catholics could not hold public office. The Province of Québec was to be governed by a governor and his appointed council, but the governor was to call an elected assembly as soon as practical. The Province of Québec's boundaries were restricted to the St. Lawrence Valley. Residents had to apply for a permit from the governor to travel west of these boundaries.

RESPONSES TO THE ROYAL PROCLAMATION

The Royal Proclamation helped establish the rights of First Nations to the lands in the West, but it did not please other citizens of British North America. French-speaking religious and landholding elites felt threatened. The French laws that protected their positions in Québec were gone.

Much of the proclamation had the goal of increasing English-speaking immigration to Québec. Britain hoped that with British laws in place, more English-speaking colonists would be encouraged to make Québec their home. However, in the years that followed the proclamation, few British immigrants arrived. The Canadian population remained the majority.

HS Based on what you read on pages 112 and 113, to what group (British, immigrant, Yankee, Canadien, First Nations) was the Royal Proclamation most significant? Why?

Figure 4-6 The Proclamation Line, 1763

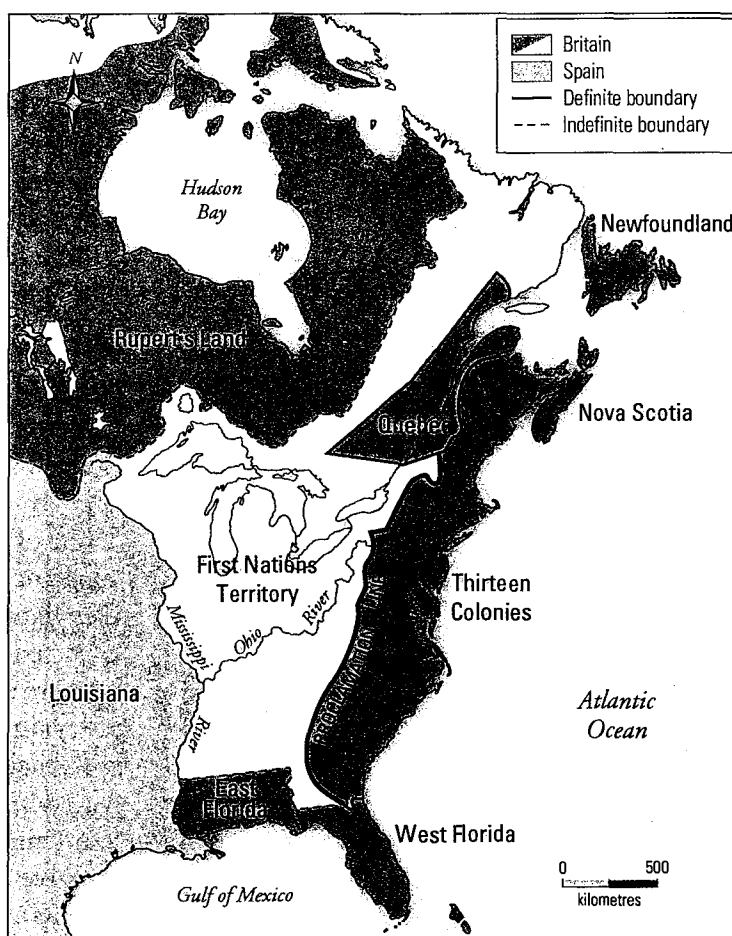




Figure 4-7 Governor James Murray was given explicit instructions from Britain to encourage French citizens to take an oath of allegiance to Britain.

GOVERNOR JAMES MURRAY

James Murray did not see the decline of the French-speaking population happening soon. Murray was military governor of Nouvelle-France from 1760 to 1763 and had proven himself to be a capable leader. He was named British North America's first Governor General after the signing of the Treaty of Paris. Murray viewed the hierarchical, aristocratic traditions of the Catholic Church and seigneuries as more stable than the demands for more democracy that were becoming louder from the residents of the Thirteen Colonies.

Murray ignored the Royal Proclamation's provision that he call an elected assembly. Only the small, Protestant minority could vote for and hold positions in such an assembly. Murray feared that creating one would cause the Canadiens to revolt. Québec's British residents complained loudly that their democratic rights were being ignored. Murray dismissed the complaints as coming from a group of unreasonable fanatics.

In the end, Britain received so many complaints that Murray was recalled in 1766 and the Royal Proclamation reviewed. The assimilation plan of the proclamation had failed. It seemed that Québec would keep its Canadian culture for the foreseeable future.

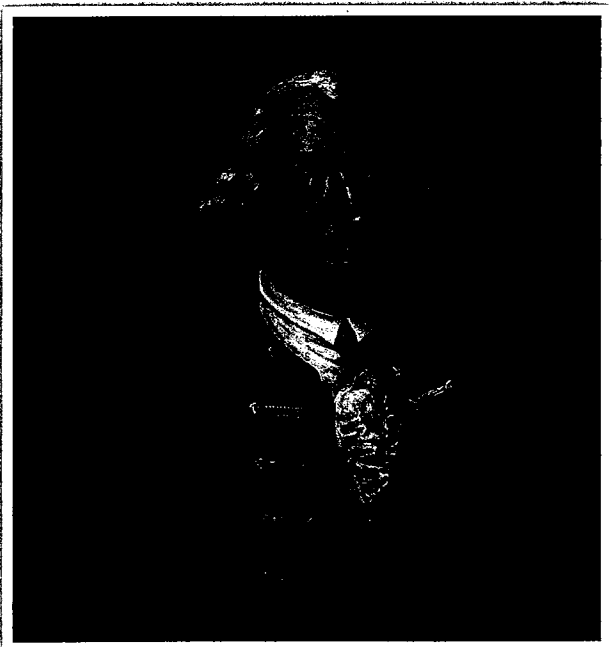


Figure 4-8 Governor Guy Carleton shared many of Murray's views on how to govern Québec.

SIR GUY CARLETON

James Murray was replaced by Sir Guy Carleton. Carleton was concerned that the discontent brewing in the Thirteen Colonies might spill over into Québec. Like Murray, Carleton soon appreciated the hardworking habits of the habitants. He, too, was annoyed by the constant bickering and complaining of the British merchants in the colony. Carleton also realized that the expected flood of British immigrants might never amount to more than a trickle. Most British settlers did not want to live in a cold and politically inhospitable environment with their former rivals, the French. Carleton agreed with Murray that, for both political and military reasons, maintaining the support of the Canadiens was more valuable than trying to win the support of a few British merchants.

MP Why might the views of Murray and Carleton about how to govern Québec differ from those of Britain or colonists in the Thirteen Colonies?

THE QUÉBEC ACT, 1774

In 1774, at Carleton's urging, the British parliament passed the *Québec Act*. The *Québec Act* revoked the Royal Proclamation and enlarged Québec's territory to include the Ohio Valley. The act also guaranteed French language rights and made provisions to allow Roman Catholics to take some roles in the colony's governance. This provision was a major concession to Québec's unique status in the British Empire. Such a provision elsewhere in the empire would have been unthinkable. The *Québec Act* reinstated French property and civil laws, but kept British criminal laws. To this day, this legal blend still exists in the province.

The act also reinstated the tithe (a tax) to support the Catholic Church. With their income secured, Church officials felt more secure under the *Québec Act*. So did seigneurs, whose land and rights were guaranteed by the return of French civil law.

HP Take a historical perspective to imagine how average citizens might view the return of the tithe. Whose interests were served by its reintroduction?

Like Murray, Carleton ignored demands for an elected assembly for fear of the instability this might introduce. Instead, he continued to govern with an appointed council. Other British North American colonies had elected assemblies: in 1758, Nova Scotia had the first elected legislative assembly in Canada and, in 1773, Prince Edward Island elected its assembly. However, even in these colonies, the governors and executive councils had most of the power. They could block any law passed by the elected legislative assemblies.

Overall, the seigneurs and Roman Catholic clergy were content with the terms of the *Québec Act*. British residents of Québec were outraged. Many believed they were being forced to live in a foreign (French) colony—not what they planned when they moved to Québec. To people in the Thirteen Colonies, the act was deemed “intolerable,” just one of several “Intolerable Acts” that Britain had passed since the mid-1760s, including many related to taxation. The act appeared to be an abuse of Britain's power over the colonies and seemed to warn of potential losses to their own political, economic, and social rights.

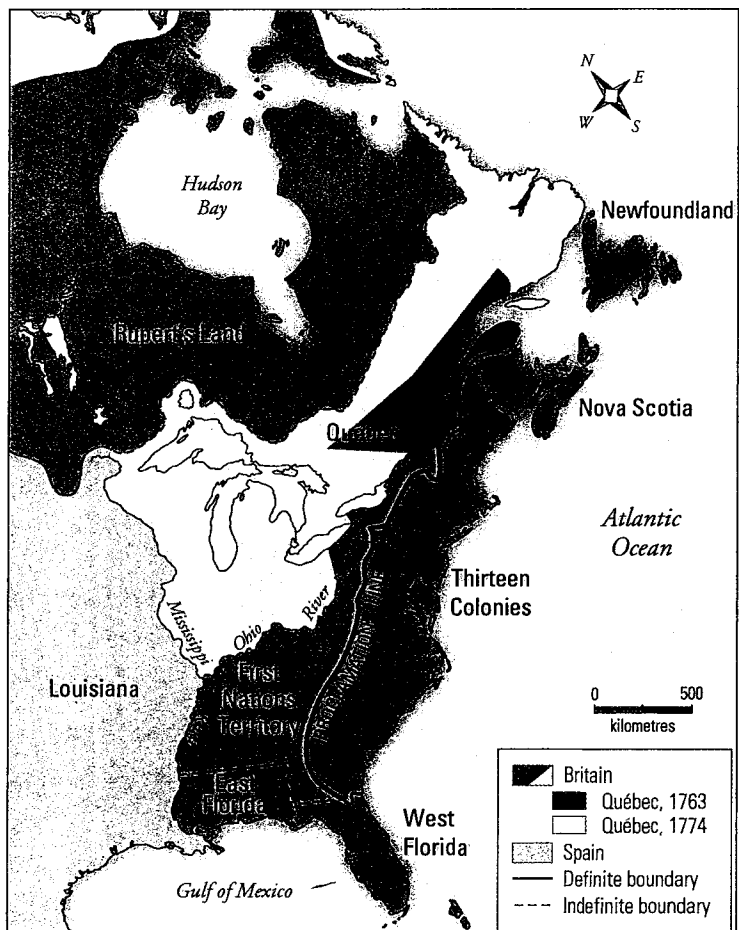
... SHAPING CANADA TODAY ...

The *Québec Act* played an important role in making Canada a bilingual country today.

CHECK FORWARD

You will learn more about Québec's position in Canada today in Chapters 12, 14, and 16.

Figure 4-9 North America After the *Québec Act*, 1774



DISCONTENT IN THE THIRTEEN COLONIES

The problem of how to govern the Province of Québec was not the only source of concern for Britain in the Americas. In the Thirteen Colonies to the south, more trouble was looming.

For many people living in the Thirteen Colonies, their relationship with Britain had become unbearable. Britain believed the Thirteen Colonies should help pay for the costly military efforts of the Seven Years' War and Pontiac's Resistance. In addition, Britain believed the colonists should help pay the costs of keeping British soldiers in North America. To this end, Britain instituted a number of taxes to try to recoup some of its expenses. The colonists were outraged by these taxes. They saw no reason that they should pay for British soldiers who seemed to serve Britain's interests more than their own. The colonists argued that they should have more voice in how they were governed and how they would be taxed. "No taxation without representation!" became a call to arms for those most angry with Britain's rule.


Figure 4-10 This illustration, created in 1773, shows a group of disgruntled colonists forcing tea down the throat of a tax collector, who has been tarred and feathered. Britain's tax on tea was a particular irritant to the Thirteen Colonies.



In addition, many colonists felt betrayed by the boundaries set by the Royal Proclamation. They had fought the French over the Ohio Valley in the Seven Years' War, only to be excluded from this territory. The *Québec Act* was the last straw. To the citizens of the Thirteen Colonies, denying colonists their right to an elected assembly was the ultimate violation. Many decided they would not wait for Britain to take this step in their own colonies.

THE AMERICAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE, 1776-1783

The Thirteen Colonies had always been separate entities until their anger against Britain caused them to unite. In 1774, twelve of the Thirteen Colonies met at the First Continental Congress. Georgia did not attend. The twelve colonies agreed to boycott British trade until their petition to Britain had been addressed. In 1775, the rebels had several armed clashes with British soldiers. On July 4, 1776, at the Second Continental Congress, the rebels drafted the Declaration of Independence, which proclaimed that the Thirteen Colonies were no longer part of the British Empire. The American War of Independence had officially begun.

 The American War of Independence is sometimes called the American Revolution, and the "rebels" who supported the war against Britain are sometimes called "patriots." What is the difference between each term? What does the difference teach you about perspectives in this war and others?

CANADIENS CALLED TO ACTION

The rebels from the Thirteen Colonies hoped the Canadiens would support their cause. The rebels printed copies of a statement to the Canadiens and posted it around Montréal and Québec City. The statement called upon Canadiens to overthrow the British.

Britain hoped the *Québec Act* had sufficiently appeased the Canadiens and that they would take up arms to fight the rebels. Church leaders supported Carleton and advised their congregations to side with the British rather than the rebellious Yankees.

When the American rebels attacked Québec City and Montréal in 1775, they were met with indifference from most Canadiens. Some Canadiens formed groups to fight the British, but most remained neutral while British troops fought off the attack.

HP Why do you think the rebels hoped Canadiens might help them? Take a historical perspective to account for the response of the Canadiens.

TREATY OF PARIS, 1783

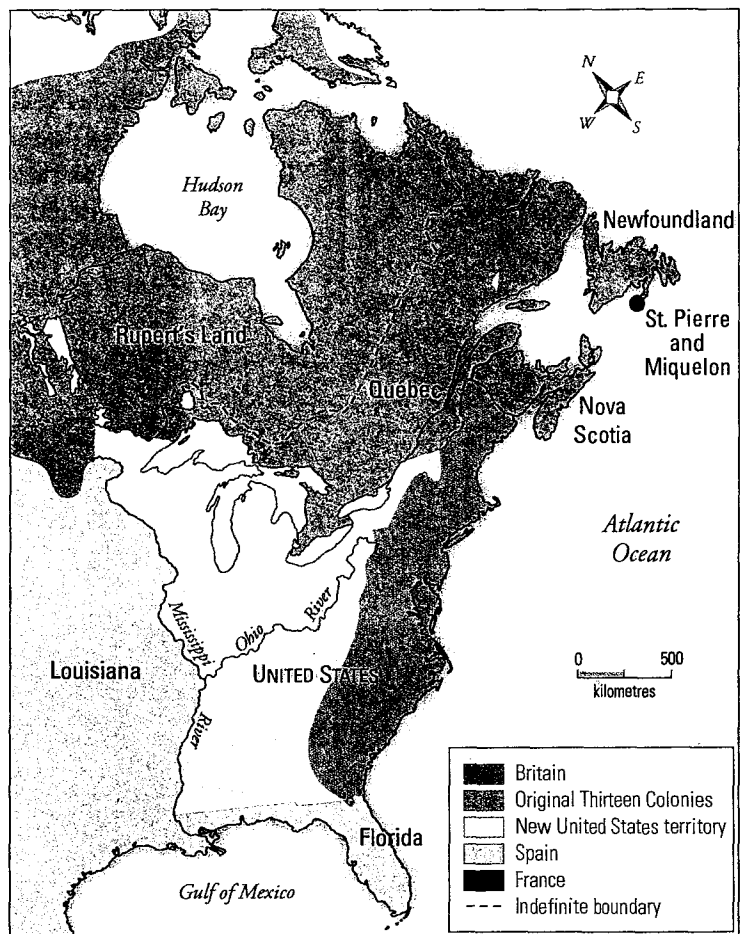
The Treaty of Paris of 1783 officially put an end to the American War of Independence. Toward the end of the war, Britain was having many financial difficulties. Peace negotiators were told to end the war at any price, so most of the Treaty of Paris reflected the goals of American negotiators. The treaty recognized British North America's right to exist independently from the new country to the south, the United States of America. However, most of the terms of the Treaty of Paris, such as new boundary lines, were generous to the United States at British North America's expense. In particular, the Americans at last gained control over the Ohio Valley.

VOICES

You are a small people compared to those who, with open arms, invite you into a fellowship. A moment's reflection should convince you which will be most beneficial for your interest and happiness, to have all the rest of North America your unalterable friends, or your inveterate enemies.

— Rebel address to the Province of Québec, October 26, 1774

Figure 4-11 North America After the Treaty of Paris, 1783



RECALL... REFLECT... RESPOND

- 1.** What do you think were the most important changes to take place in North America in the twenty years from the fall of Nouvelle-France to the Treaty of Paris, 1783? How do you think life stayed the same? Examine these changes and continuities from a variety of perspectives at the time.
- 2.** Choose a graphic organizer to summarize the major causes and consequences of the *Québec Act* of 1774. Include the direct and indirect consequences.