

What Was The Royal Proclamation Of 1763-64?

Purpose of the Royal Proclamation

- To deal with the problems of language, religion, and the legal and seigneurial system in the newly conquered colony
- To replace the military government in the colony with a civil administration
- To pacify the western First Nations Groups (Pontiac's rebellion).

Its main articles centered around:

Territory

The new colony was now called the **Province of Quebec**. However, its territory was reduced to a triangular shape along the St. Lawrence River. The Ohio Valley was denied to both Quebec and the British-American colonies. It was reserved for the Native Indians.



Government

The British military government was replaced by a **civil** government consisting of an appointed Governor (Governor Murray) and an appointed council that was sympathetic to the French Canadians. Roman Catholics were not permitted to hold public office since the **Test Act** required office holders to take communion in the Church of England. An elected legislative assembly was promised when conditions would be more appropriate.

Religion

Freedom of worship was continued however instructions to Murray indicated Britain's intention of establishing a Protestant church and schools as a means of **assimilating** the French.

Legal System

It intended to replace the French Civil Code with British Common Law. However, Gov. Murray found this to be impractical. Instead, he

created two courts of law:

- A Superior Court would deal with more serious cases and apply the laws of England.
- A lesser court would hear minor cases and apply the old French laws.

What were the reactions to the Royal Proclamation?

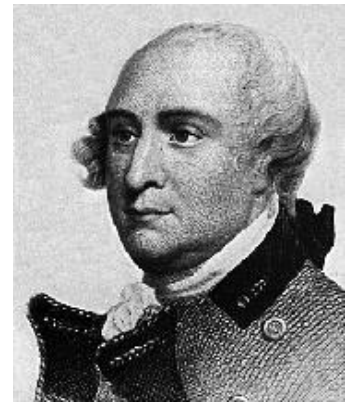
The 13 Colonies

They were very upset since they were denied access to the Ohio Valley. Wasn't that one of the main reasons they had gone to war with France in the first place-to open up the Ohio Valley and the interior to settlers?

The English merchants in Quebec

Extremely upset over the fact that they were denied an elected legislative assembly and that there were restrictions on the fur trade in the Ohio Valley. They protested to the British government to the point where Governor Murray was recalled (1766) and replaced by Governor Carleton. The change was largely cosmetic, however, since Carleton continued Murray's policies.

Governor Carleton



The French Canadians in Quebec

The Québécois disliked the new boundary and they were suspicious of the promise of an elected assembly. They were also uneasy about the lack of religious guarantees and were worried about British attempts at assimilation.

An Ominous Prediction...

The American colonists were upset. They had been excluded from the interior and were increasingly annoyed by what they saw as the greediness of the English merchants in Montréal. There were dark clouds on the horizon. Britain's American colonies were becoming more assertive, aggressive, and independent. How long would they be content to remain mere colonies of Britain?

- Without a French threat from the north, the American colonies would probably demand outright independence.
- Without a French enemy to unite them, the American colonies would start squabbling with Britain itself. The loss of the American colonies would be far greater catastrophe for Britain than France's loss of Canada. This is exactly what happened!