

Chapter 6: The Duel for North America Notes

- The Europeans were fighting for North America
 - England, France, Spain
- Four wars were fought in Europe
- N.B.: England + Scotland → Great Britain (1707)

France Finds a Foothold in Canada

- France had clashes between Protestant Huguenots and Roman Catholics
 - Huguenots slaughtered (10,000 on St. Bartholomew's Day), sought religious freedom
 - Edict of Nantes gave a little toleration to Protestants, lessened religious wars
 - France became very powerful because of this (less internal conflict)
- Québec was founded in 1608 (right after Jamestown), first settlement of New France (Canada)
 - Founded by Samuel de Champlain, the "Father of New France"
 - Allied with the Huron tribe against the Iroquois Confederation (allied with British)
 - The Iroquois became French enemies, sabotaging and slowing them
- New France became directly ruled by the king, very autocratic
 - No democratic system nor trial by jury
- Population did not grow very quickly (60,000 by 1750): it wasn't very attractive to settle there
 - French peasants would not gain more in New France
 - No religious freedom guaranteed in Canada
 - France had wealthy colonies in the West Indies.

Migration and Settlement: The French had similar strife back in their homeland as England, especially religious persecution. However, since they had the Edict of Nantes their religious freedom back at home was greater than that in the New World, so they had less of the motivation many of the English had, especially in New England. Because France also had wealthy colonies in the West Indies, there was little incentive for people to immigrate into New France, which was desolate and infertile being so far north, compared to the productive lands of the south. This lack of interest in Canada led to a low population, and a low population led to a dependence on Native American allies (the Hurons). Later on, simply lacking manpower was also a disadvantage in military campaigns against the more populous British colonies.

France Fans Out

- Beaver was an important commodity to the French
 - Considered luxurious and was warm
 - Coueurs de bois ("runners of the woods") were the fur-trappers looking for beaver
 - Lived free lifestyle
 - Gave many names to places such as Baton Rouge and Des Moines
 - Voyageurs had Native Americans join the fur trade
 - Life was perilous for Native Americans with disease and alcoholism introduced by the Europeans
 - Up to 400 boats to look for beavers at the height of the trade

- Fur trade went very far: to the Great Lakes, Arkansas, Missouri
- Jesuits were French missionaries; not very successful with conversion, but good explorers
- Detroit founded by Antoine Cadillac in 1701
- Robert de la Salle created Louisiana
 - Tried to block out the Spanish in the South
- In Illinois, French had a lot of farming

Geography and the Environment: A large part of the economy of early colonial New France was based on two natural products: beaver pelts and wheat farming. Two new professions of people: forest explorers (coureurs de bois) and fur-trappers (voyageurs) created an economy based on a hot commodity: beaver. These beavers created furs that helped keep the French warm in the cold Canada and to maintain a high degree of trade and a strong relationship with the Native Americans. Further south, the French became exploratory, discovering vast swaths of land that included Louisiana and Illinois. In these southern colonies, the climate was more temperate and suitable for farming. As a result, a farming economy was established here; being at approximately the same latitude as the British middle colonies (the “bread colonies”), they were able to grow wheat efficiently. However, the French were not very diversified in their economic abilities with only these two major professions; perhaps this was another reason the French were less prosperous and more weak than the British that they fought, who had much industry and trade.

The Clash of Empires

- King William’s War and Queen Anne’s War were earliest fights between European nations for American control
 - Part of the War of Austrian Succession (a global war)
 - Battles between French (with the Spanish) and English with Native American allies
 - Mostly guerilla warfare
 - The British won, were given Nova Scotia, Hudson Bay, Newfoundland
 - Some trade began between British and Spanish, but did not end well
- War of Jenkin’s Ear in Caribbean and Georgia, led to a standstill
- King George’s War was between English and the French/Spanish again
 - Again an English victory
 - Captured Louisbourg, a major strongpoint
 - Was returned because of peace treaty, left Americans outraged

George Washington Inaugurates War with France

- Ohio Valley was a major place that both countries wanted
 - English colonists were going to push into it
 - French needed it to connect Canada with Louisiana
- English colonists had ownership of land there, but the French had built forts
 - Fort Duquesne at Pittsburgh was largest one
- Washington led 150 militiamen and killed some French soldiers
 - French returned, made Washington surrender and retreat
- In the north in British-conquered Acadia, French Acadians scattered to prevent rebellion

Politics and Power: The events in these sections are major power plays over land between the English and the French, ones that set up for the French and Indian War (and eventually the American Revolutionary War). In these wars, the two parties had different interests: the French were keen on building a more connected empire, one from Canada all the way into Louisiana in the south to avoid being weakened by separation; and the English colonists were on the search for new land for colonization simply as part of the natural westward expansion as they needed more land for the growing population. Ultimately, this resulted in conflict between the two countries. This conflict set three precedents that would remain throughout the French and Indian War and the Revolutionary war: firstly, with the exception of the War of Jenkin's Ear, the wars were won by the British; secondly, guerilla warfare proved to be a very deadly weapon against the outdated techniques of the past; thirdly, the English had a common cause that gave them unity and strength. Although these skirmishes may seem minor compared to the following wars, they gave the English colonists experience for the violence to come.

Global War and Colonial Diversity

- French and Indian War (Seven Years' War) was first Anglo-French starting in the Americas
- First "world war": in America, Europe, West Indies, Philippines, Africa, on the ocean
 - English and Prussia vs. France, Spain, Austria, Russia
 - French weakened mostly in Germany, had weak fight in the Americas
- Albany Congress was meeting summoned by the British to create greater colonial unity
 - Benjamin Franklin was major advocate, created famous political cartoon:



- Also tried to have the Iroquois on their side

America in the World: Being the first time the Americas are engaged in European-versus-European conflict (as opposed to conquistador-versus-native), the Americas became a stage of global importance, a battleground perhaps equal in importance to the others happening simultaneously around the world in the world-wide War of Austrian Succession. This may have had several factors that raised the importance of these events to a critical level: the British had the potential in losing the Americas, and therefore assembled the Albany Congress to establish unity; as a result of this, the colonies did become more unified as politicians like Benjamin Franklin persuaded the people that separation would equal death; lastly, this involved greater interaction with the Native Americans, whose regard had been growing ever less since the beginning of the colonization. This increased effort did end up strengthening the colonies as a whole by unifying them—making them stronger against the French, Spanish, and Native Americans, as well as the British in the Revolutionary War to come.

Braddock's Blundering and Its Aftermath

- General Edward Braddock had many poorly trained men
 - Had many British regulars (trained military men) but many poorly trained Americans
 - Went slowly with heavy guns and hacking a way through the forest
 - Many died in a guerilla fight by Native Americans in the forest
 - Easy victory for French, major losses and death of Braddock for the English
 - The Native Americans continued fearlessly along frontier, colonists vulnerable

Pitt's Palms of Victory

- William Pitt ("Great Commoner") was likeable military leader: eloquent, handsome, confident
 - Became "Organizer of Victory" when he changed military tactics of the British
 - Focus away from West Indies, instead at major centers (Québec, Montréal)
 - Use younger, energetic leaders (like Washington, unlike Braddock)
 - Won Louisbourg, Québec (in Battle of Québec, on the Plains of Abraham), Montréal
- British won the war and a great deal of land
 - French all of Canada to British, Louisiana to Spanish
 - British and Spanish traded Cuba and Florida
 - Britain became dominant naval power and power in the Americas

Culture and Society: In his attempt to fight the French, Pitt fell under heavy fire in guerilla warfare. Using many conventional British soldiers ("regulars") as well as untrained American citizens, this led to an easy defeat. William Pitt, a popular general, did the opposite of Braddock and suggested storming the more important centers and to use younger leaders with newer tactics. This was an unprecedented change in strategy that was very successful and helped create the innovation in America even today. The choice to completely change focus during a war under the command of a single man is one part, as well as to say to go along with a dynamicism based on youthful, inexperienced—albeit more creative and innovative—leaders is another; this is carried in the spirit of young, even teenage, entrepreneurs and leaders in today's society. Also uncommon was the rise of a handsome, likeable, political leader that rises out of popularity and not age and experience; following him are many cases of it, from young commander George Washington to popular real-estate tycoon and presidential candidate Donald Trump.

Restless Colonists

- American colonists gained much experience; ~20,000 fought during the war
- Americans saw British as not always invincible (such as in Braddock's battle)
- Increased conflict between patronizing British and the Americans
 - British saw the Americans as lowly and uncivilized
 - Americans thought they had done a lot of work and risked a lot to help the British
- Americans had some sense of self-interest, promoting trade with enemies during the war
 - British forced them to stop all trade
- Colonists were pretty disunited before the war
 - During the war, fighting colonists from different areas learned that they were not all that different—began to create some unity within the colonies

American and National Identity: The war led to a great change in the way Americans saw each other and the Britons. During the war, a great number of citizens from different regions of colonial America came together to fight; during this time, many reconciled their differences and realized that they were not all that different. Along with the greater political unity that was required to successfully fight off the French and the Spanish, there existed a more natural, personal relationship between them. As for the British, winning the war for them had not improved their view of the American citizens; in fact, it worsened it, as the British considered the colonists uncoordinated, uncivilized soldiers; this led to a condescension of the Americans, and a resulting disdain between mother country and colonies. This was also a great influence on the American sentiment (hate) that led to the American Revolutionary War.

War's Fateful Aftermath

- Loss of great enemies allowed for great American independence
- French hopeful that the Americans might be able to break free of England eventually
- Spanish also largely gone
 - With them, the Native Americans had limited trading/ negotiating options
- Pontiac's Uprising was a rebellion by the Ottawa tribe and allies against the British
 - Laid siege to Detroit, captured many British forts in the west, killed 2000 colonists
 - British had strong counterattack, rebellion crushed and Pontiac killed
 - Removal of the Pontiac Indians rid of another enemy and gave westward freedom
- Proclamation of 1763 by British prevented colonists from settling west of Appalachians
 - Was meant to prevent future conflicts like Pontiac's Uprising
 - Angered many Americans, who felt it was their right to own that land
 - Many of them went west in revolt

America in the World: As the opposition disappeared, the British American colonies suddenly had a much lesser fear and a greater potential in exploring and innovating. The French and Spanish, who were also powerful empire-builders, could not infringe on their land anymore; the Native Americans would not attack them at the frontier unpredictably. This paved the way for the era of the pioneers in the westward expansion. Also, going deeper in the backcountry allowed the colonists to have more protection from enemies, for whom it would be difficult getting in so far and not knowing the secrets of the land. In this way, during the Revolutionary War, the colonists lost some coastal cities but were largely successful farther inland.