

COLONIES AND CANADA

1585 TO 1885

ROANOKE COLONY TO SASKATCHEWAN REBELLION

ERA SUMMARY – CANADA

The exploration of Canada by French and English explorers commenced very soon after the discovery of the Americas by Columbus, although permanent settlement of the new world colonies did not occur until the early seventeenth century. The early explorers of North America, whose names are still recorded on lakes, bays, and rivers of the region, began with the voyage of [John Cabot](#) in 1497, and include [Jacques Cartier](#), [Henry Hudson](#), [Samuel de Champlain](#), [Martin Frobisher](#), [John Davis](#), [William Baffin](#), [Alexander Mackenzie](#), and many others. Most were in search of the elusive Northwest-passage, from the Atlantic to Asia, which would have meant enormous riches for its discoverers, had it existed.

Early French and English Colonies in Canada—England's first attempt to colonize Canada was a failed expedition to Newfoundland by [Humphrey Gilbert](#), during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. It was France, led by the explorers Cartier and Champlain that claimed the regions of Canada along the St. Lawrence Seaway. The earliest French colonies were at Montreal and Quebec, which were established as trading posts for the French missionaries and trappers who went to live among the Indians.

From the beginning, the region of Canada was disputed between England and France. England controlled Hudson Bay, Newfoundland, and the southern coastal areas, while France centered its colonies around the St. Lawrence seaway and the great lakes. Britain's domination of the seas meant that its settlements were better supplied, and in closer contact with the mother country, but France's close relations with the Indian tribes gave it almost complete control of the fur trade, and easy access to the interior regions. During the late 17th and early 18th centuries, France and Britain were often at war, and although these conflicts went by different names in Europe, in the Americas, they were called the [French Indian Wars](#). These Indian wars even continued when France and England were official at peace, but in spite of over seventy years of fighting, and many heroic and horrible events, nothing was permanently resolved until 1759, the year in which [Britain conquered Quebec](#).



IROQUOIS ATTACKING FATHER JOGUES AND CONVERTS

Within a few years of that battle, fought between the famous Generals [General Wolfe](#) and [General Montcalm](#), Britain had driven France from North America, and taken possession of all of her French colonies in the region.

Canada under British Rule—When Britain took control of New France, she allowed the French settlers to continue to govern themselves according to their own customs, and allowed freedom of worship for all Catholics. One exception to this general tolerance of their French subjects, occurred in Nova Scotia, where an independent settlement of Acadians refused to take an oath of loyalty to the British government. In consequence they were forcibly deported from the region, and many ended up in New Orleans. Many ethnic Cajuns in New Orleans are the descendants of these deported Acadians. The French-speaking colonies of Canada continued as a British province until 1791, when New France was partitioned into French-speaking Lower Canada, (modern Quebec), and English-speaking Upper Canada (modern Ontario). The reason for this, was that following the revolutionary war, a great number of Tory settlers had migrated to Upper Canada, and the two settlements were too dissimilar to rule under a single government. During this time other British colonies were also settled in New Brunswick, Newfoundland, and Nova Scotia.

Most of the British settlements at this time were located off the eastern seaboard, but traders from the Hudson Bay Company, a company first chartered by [Charles II](#), were busy discovering and mapping the vast land to the west. The colonization of the western plains began in 1811 with the settlement of the Red River Valley, but the settlers there ran into many of the same troubles that plagued the earlier settlers in America: hostile Indians, disease, and hunger. Over a long period of time, however, the southern parts of Manitoba became a thriving colony. In the far west, [George Vancouver](#) explored the Columbia River basin and Vancouver Island, and claimed the entire region for Britain. Like most of the rest of western Canada, however, permanent settlement occurred slowly until the opening of the Canadian Pacific Railroad in 1885.

Confederation of Canada—In the early 1830's, the elections reform bill in Great Britain resulted in a grand restructuring of the British Parliament. After this occurred many of the colonies, including the provinces of Canada, became enamored with the idea of democratic self-rule. In 1837 there were [widespread riots](#) in both Upper and Lower Canada in protest against the British colonial government. Lord Durham went to investigate and proposed the Union of the two provinces under limited self-rule. While the residents were still British subjects, they were allowed to elect parliaments and pass laws that pertained to local matters. In 1867, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Nova Scotia joined the confederation, followed by Manitoba and British Columbia in 1870, and Alberta and Saskatchewan in 1905. The last province to join the Canadian Federation was Newfoundland in 1947.

CHARACTERS – CANADA

EXPLORERS

Humphrey Gilbert	1537–1583	Sea-faring adventurer. Founded the first English colony in Canada.
Martin Frobisher	1535–1594	Explored much of Canada in search of the Northwest Passage. Fought in the Armada.
John Davis	1550–1605	British explorer who sought the Northwest Passage through Canada.
Henry Hudson	1575–1611	Explorer who discovered Hudson Bay and other parts of North America.
Jacques Cartier	1491–1557	Discovered the St. Lawrence Seaway and great lakes, while searching for Northwest Passage.
Pere Marquette	1637–1675	French Missionary who explored the Mississippi River from the Great Lakes.
La Salle	1643–1687	Dauntless adventurer who followed the Mississippi to its mouth, and claimed all for France.
William Baffin	1585–1622	Discovered Baffin Bay while on a quest to find the Northwest Passage.
George Vancouver	1757–1798	Discovered Puget Sound, Vancouver Island, Columbia River; claimed region for Britain.
Alexander Mackenzie	1764–1820	Discovered the Mackenzie River and Great Northern Lakes of Canada.

FRENCH HEROES

Samuel de Champlain	1580–1635	Founded French colonies in the St. Lawrence seaway and great lake region. Father of 'New France.'
Count Frontenac	1622–1698	Governor of New France from 1672 to 1698. Expanded fur trade, and fought with British.
Madeline de Vercheres	1678–1747	Fended off a tribe of Indians attacking her for when she was only fourteen.
Daulac	1635–1660	Led a group of volunteers from Montreal to ambush a force of Iroquois. The entire force was killed to a man.
Saint Isaac Jogues	1607–1646	Heroic Jesuit missionary to Indians. Tortured by the Indians, but returned to preach the gospel.
General Montcalm	1712–1759	Military leader of New France during the Seven Year War; died at <i>Battle of Quebec</i> .

BRITISH HEROES

General Braddock	1695–1755	Led a disastrous campaign to Fort Duquesne (Ohio) during the French and Indian Wars.
General Wolfe	1727–1759	Defeated the French at the <i>Battle of Quebec</i> , giving Canada to Britain. Died during battle.
Lord Durham	1792–1840	Helped draft the Reform bill of 1832. Then recommended a form of self-government for Canada.
Lord Selkirk	1771–1820	Obtained a land grant near Red River valley and help poor Scottish pioneers settle there.
Laura Secord	1775–1868	During War of 1812, warned a British Lieutenant of an impending surprise attack.

NATIVE HEROES

Tecumseh	1768–1813	Shawnee Hero. Tried to unify tribes against the colonists. Fought for Britain during War of 1812.
Louis Riel	1844–1885	Leader of the Metis tribes of Manitoba and Saskatchewan who fought for their rights.

TIMELINE – CANADA

EXPLORATION

- 1497 [John Cabot](#) claims Newfoundland for England.
- 1534 [Jacques Cartier](#) explores Gulf of St. Lawrence on first voyage.
- 1576 [Martin Frobisher](#) searches for the Northwest Passage.
- 1583 [Humphrey Gilbert](#) attempts to found colony in Newfoundland.
- 1611 [Henry Hudson](#) is killed by a mutinous crew in Hudson Bay.
- 1789 [Alexander Mackenzie](#) crosses Canada, discovers Mackenzie River and Arctic Ocean.
- 1792 [George Vancouver](#) discovers Vancouver Island and Puget Sound.

FRENCH COLONIES

- 1542 [Jacques Cartier](#) fails to establish permanent colonies on third voyage.
- 1562-98 French Wars of religion interrupt settlement. Huguenots forbidden to emigrate.
- 1608 [Samuel de Champlain](#) establishes a French colony at Quebec; becomes capital of New France.
- 1615 First Catholic missionaries sent to New France to convert natives.
- 1632 Colony at Port Royal on Bay of Fundy re-established; becomes capital of Acadia.
- 1646 [Saint Isaac Jogues](#), missionary to the Hurons, tortured, martyred by Mohawks.
- 1682-92 [Count Frontenac](#) first term as governor of New France. Protects colonists from Iroquois.
- 1755-63 [French Indian Wars](#) results in loss of French colonies in America.
- 1755 Defeat of British [General Braddock](#) at *Battle of Fort Duquesne*.
- 1755 Acadians from Nova Scotia forced to relocate.
- 1759 At the *Battle of Quebec* [General Wolfe](#) wins New France for the British.

BRITISH CANADA

- 1670 Hudson Bay Trading Company chartered by [Charles II](#).
- 1763 Treaty of Paris grants New France to Britain on condition of religious liberty for Catholics.
- 1776 Canada declines to revolt against Britain, due to British toleration for French Catholics.
- 1783 Emigration of Tories in lower colonies to Canadian dominions after Revolutionary War.
- 1791 Former territories of New France partitioned into Lower and Upper Canada.
- 1837 Rebellions in Upper and Lower Canada against British rule.
- 1840 Act of Union, unites Upper and Lower Canada.
- 1867 New Brunswick and Nova Scotia join Canadian Federation.

- 1870** Manitoba and British Columbia join Canadian Federation.
1885 Completion of Canadian Pacific Rail, Montreal to Vancouver.
1905 Saskatchewan and Albert join Canadian Federation.
1949 Newfoundland joins Canadian Federation.

RECOMMENDED READING – CANADA

CORE READING ASSIGNMENTS

- Home - [Peeps at History - Canada](#) *entire book*
Marshall - [Our Empire Story](#) [Lief the Son of Eric](#) to [Louis Riel](#) (22)

ALSO RECOMMENDED

- Gaskoin - [The Hanoverians](#) [Britains Beyond the Sea](#) (1)
Synge - [Reign of Queen Victoria](#) [Canadian Federation](#) to [Dominion of Canada](#) (2)
Synge - [Book of Discovery](#) [Cabot Sails to Newfoundland](#) to [Franklin Discovers Passage](#) (21)

** Level I and II Study Questions are based on **Core Reading Assignments**.*