

Level 3 History
Chapter 2
1608-1760

This chapter will focus on how the colony in North America grew and changed under French control.

Part 1: The Colonization of New France in the early 1600's

In the early 1600's (17th century), France set a goal to try and colonize the St Lawrence Valley and profit from the natural resources in the area. In particular, beaver pelts.

Another goal of France's was to populate the colony and evangelize the Natives.

These goals were achieved eventually, but not without a lot of effort and many failures along the way.

Early attempts to colonize

In the early 1600's France's economy was based on **mercantilism**. This meant that France believed their power and wealth was based on how much precious metal they accumulated. So, France looked to make as much gold/silver as possible through the sale of goods acquired in the colonies.

This idea of mercantilism was how France ran its colonies, including the new colony in the St Lawrence Valley. The colony had to supply natural resources that would allow France to make goods that could be sold to other countries.

One of the natural resources that was sent back to France was the beaver pelt. Once it was back in France, the beaver pelt would be made into hats. These hats were quite in fashion at the time and highly sought after! (very desired) Merchants easily sold these hats to people both in France and in other countries in Europe.

King Henry VI made wanted to set up a colony in France that would protect France's prosperous beaver trade. To do this her used chartered companies.

A chartered company was a company run by merchants and investors. They were given special privileges in the colony. The privilege was the **monopoly** they had to get as much resources as they could from the colony at a profit to the chartered company. In exchange, the King wanted them to be in charge of populating the colony. The chartered company had to bring over colonists at their own cost.

In 1608 the City of Quebec was founded by Samuel Champlain. It became the first permanent settlement in New France. He chose a site for this city that was close to the rivers to allow for easier trade with the Native Peoples, and that could monitor which ships were travelling along the St Lawrence River.

So, with companies in place whose “job” it was to populate New France and a permanent city set up, the colony should have began to flourish. However it didn’t. One of the first colonists to come to New France was Louis Hebert. 10 years after he arrived there were only about 4 other families living in the city. The colony was still mostly fur traders, explorers and businessmen. (and a few Catholic priests). It was not growing.

Relations with the Native Peoples

One of France’s goals in New France was to make stronger alliances with the Native People and to **convert** them to Catholicism.

More alliances with the Native People meant more ways of getting the Natural Resources. The Natives knew how to hunt, where to hunt and would trade the beaver pelts for items. This helped the chartered companies increase their profits! By 1620 France had trade agreements with most of the Native Nations throughout Eastern North America. (though not all....the others were allied with England) They did this by agreeing to fight the Huron’s enemy – The Iroquois.

To help France achieve it’s other goal with the Native People, missionaries were sent to New France. They set up missions and lived among the Natives learning their language so that they could more easily teach them the ways of the Church.

Some of the first missionary groups included:

- *Jesuits
- *Les Recollets

Part 2 – New France from 1627-1663

The King of France has permitted the Chartered Companies to operate with the understanding that they would help populate New France. To do this the companies had to use their own money to entice people to move to the new colony. Many of these chartered companies had their rights taken away when it was found that they were not helping with the population problem. Why should these companies spend their own money to populate the colony? They had the Native People doing the work, so they didn’t need workers.

By 1627 there were just over 100 colonists in New France, but most of them were men.

The Company of 100 Associates

In April 1627 the **Company of 100 Associates** was established by a man named Cardinal Richelieu. He was both an advisor to the King (Louis XIII) and a rich businessman. This company was controlled by the state, unlike the previous Chartered Companies. 100 rich men put their money together to make this company, including both Richelieu and Champlain.

The Company had 2 goals:

- *evangelize the Native People
- *development of the colony AND populate it to 4000 people within 15 years.

Sadly, even this state run company ran into problems that limited its success.

War! In 1628 France and England were at war. Englishmen known as the Kirke Brothers, captured 4 ships that had 400 French colonists on board. The Kirke brothers also captured Quebec City briefly and emptied the warehouse of all the stored furs. This forced many French to leave the colony – including Champlain. With profits pretty much gone the Company of 100 Associates couldn't afford to fulfill its goal of populating the colony.

In 1632, once the war with the English was over the English left New France and Champlain returned to the colony with about 150 colonists.

In 1634 Trois-Rivieres was founded as a permanent fort. It was set up inside the fort of 100 Associates to store the furs and hopefully better protect them.

In 1636 Chales Huaault de Montmagny became the first governor general to be appointed in New France. His job was to oversee the running of the colony and represent the interests of the King. So now the governor general and the Company of 100 Associates shared responsibility for running the colony of New France.

There was still a problem facing the Company of 100 Associates and that was their failure to populate the colony to 4000 colonists. So they tried allowing **engages** into the colony. These were craftspeople, farmers or domestic workers who would sign a contract agreeing to work in the colony for free in exchange for passage, food and shelter. This attempt failed because about half of the engages returned to France after their contracts (usually 3 years) ended.

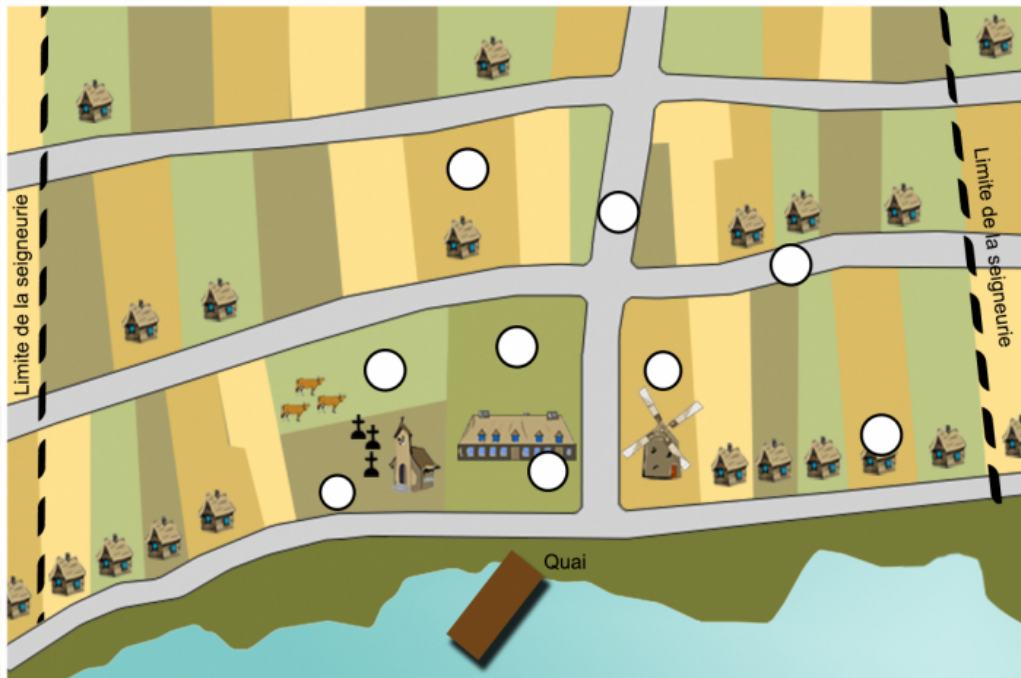
Now the Company of 100 Associates still failed to populate the colony AND they had a huge debt to pay off. So, pay off their debts they allowed smaller merchants to work in the fur trade in exchange these smaller merchants had to pay a portion of their profit to the Company of 100 Associates. These were known as **Communaute des Habitants**. (this started up around 1630) Unfortunately this only helped to pay back the investment lost on a few of the key investors of the Company of 100 Associates. You can be sure that men like Richelieu and Champlain paid themselves back first!

The Seigneurial System

One of the responsibilities of the Company of 100 Associates was to develop the colony. In order to do this they divided the land in a similar way to the way land was divided in France. This system was called the **Seigneurial System**.

Strips of land were divided up into areas called **Seigneuries** and given to a **Seigneur**. These Seigneurs were often members of the rich French aristocracy, military officers or rich bourgeoisie (rich merchants/businessmen not from the nobility). They were all rich and influential. Sometimes even certain religious communities owned seigneuries.

It was expected that the Seigneur would “rent” out parts of his land to peasants called **censitaires**. They worked the land and had to pay the Seigneur an annual rent for the use of the land.



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Catholicism in New France

The Church played a very important role in the development of New France.

*Ville Marie (later called Montreal) was founded in 1642 by Paul de Chomedey Maisonneuve and Jeanne Mance.

*Jeanne Mance later started the Hotel Dieu hospital

*The Catholic Church was the only official church in New France

*Every parish had a church

*Colonists were expected to pay a tithe (tax paid to the church...often in grain/goods)

*Several Religious organizations came to New France each with their own goals:

Religious Community	Date they arrived	Service they offered
Jesuits		
Recollets		
Ursulines		
Augustines		
Sulpicians		
Secular Daughters of the Congregation of Mont Notre Dame		
Hospitallers of St Joseph		

Native North American Acculturation

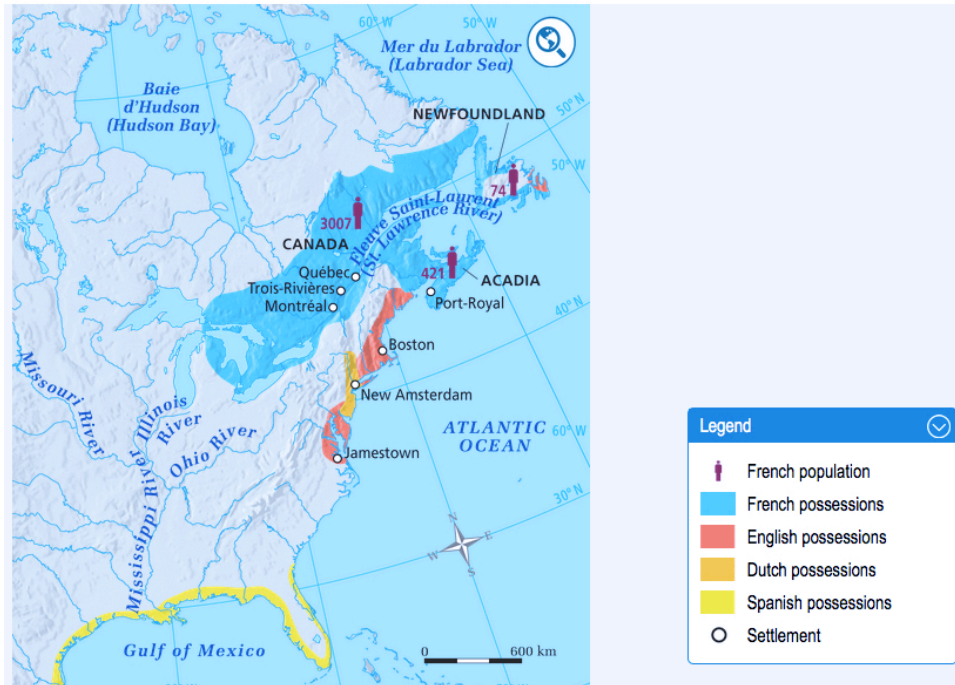
During the same time as the French are slowly building up New France we have the small wars against the Iroquois. This culminated in a huge massacre where the Iroquois almost wiped out the Huron-Wendat nation which was allied to the French.

Disease and war limited the population growth of many of the Native Nations in the 17th century. Slowly as the European culture spread through the region, we see the slow acculturation of the Natives. They came to adopt the European ways....clothes....tools and

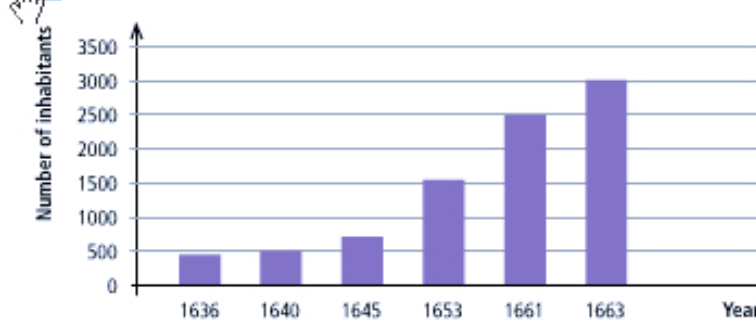
religion. During this time of disease and war between Native nations, the fur trade became endangered and this meant that New France's economy was also at risk.

New France 1663...(before the Royal Government is set up)

Occupation of the territory of New France, circa 1663



35 The population of Canada, 1636–1663



Data from: Robert Larin, *Brève histoire du peuplement européen en Nouvelle-France*, 2000.

By looking at both the map and chart 35 on this page, we can see that the population of New France did not reach its goal of 4000 colonists. The Company of 100 Associates did not fulfil its requirements.

With the economy at risk, the population not growing and the English colonies to the south growing at a rapid rate, France had to do something!