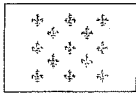


# French Colonization



Prior to the 1660s, France had done very little colonization when compared with other European nations.

France had been too busy with European wars to concentrate on colonization. Also, the French mercantile economy was directed by the state (the French government) with the leadership provided by the king and his ministers. Since the money that funded colonization and expansion came from the aristocracy and the Roman Catholic Church, developments were slow and cautious.

The French government granted trading monopolies to trading companies that promised to invest a portion of their profits in colonization. But these merchants were not interested in colonization. Thus, few settlers immigrated to New France before the French government took over the colony in the 1660s.

## Rule by Trading Companies

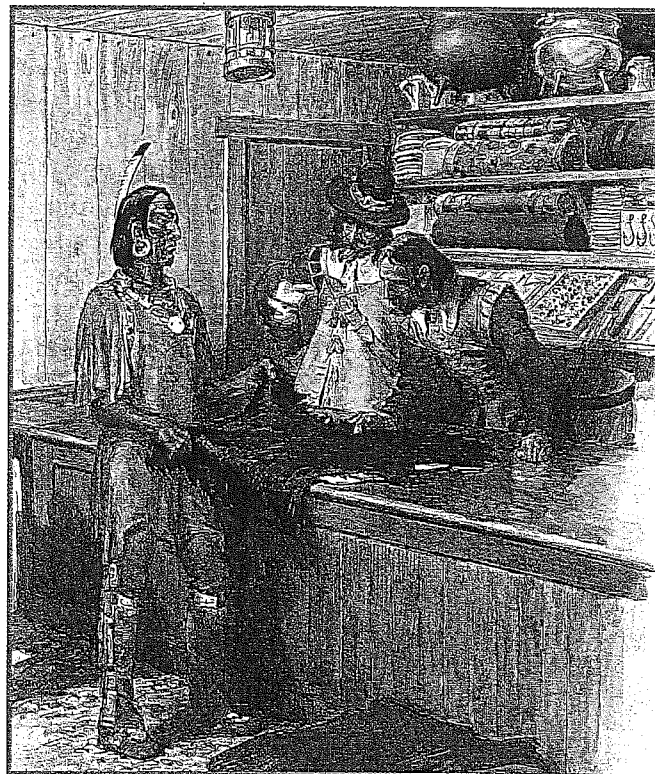
Trading companies controlled and managed the French fur trade in North America. These companies played an important role in mercantilism. The traders were the merchants who obtained the raw materials (furs) from the Native peoples, and shipped them to France to be processed and sold for higher prices. They also sold or traded European manufactured goods with the Native tribes.

That part of North America known as New France was not colonized until the early 1600s because France had been too involved in European wars to concentrate on North America. During a lull between wars, the French king realized that colonies were necessary to protect the riches of the fur trade from other European powers. Mercantilism would not work without colonies. Between 1603 and 1645, the French state granted trading monopolies to individuals and companies. Each of these was supposed to help in the colonization of New France.

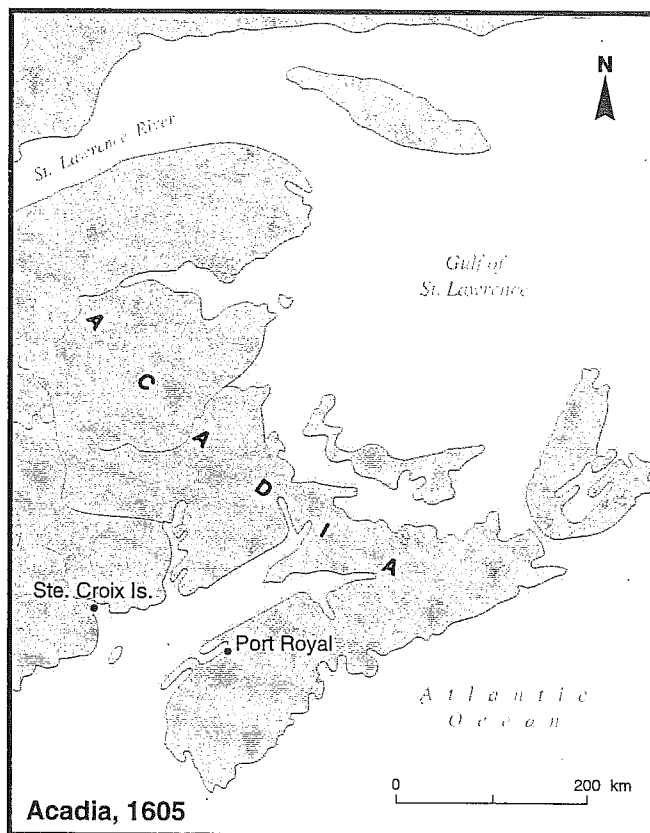
## Pierre Du Gua de Monts

### Settlement At Port Royal

In 1603, Pierre Du Gua de Monts was granted a monopoly on the fur trade in Canada. His goal was to protect his land from illegal fur traders by establishing a permanent settlement near the mouth of the St. Lawrence River. In 1604, de Monts and his mapmaker-manager, Samuel de Champlain, established a French settlement on Ste. Croix Island in Acadia. This settlement was moved to Port Royal in 1605. Unfortunately, Port Royal was poorly located. The settlement did not keep other French fur traders from establishing trading posts and trading for furs.



*In the Trading Room.* A Native person has brought furs to the French at a trading post to trade for European goods.



# Acadia

## The Importance of Acadia

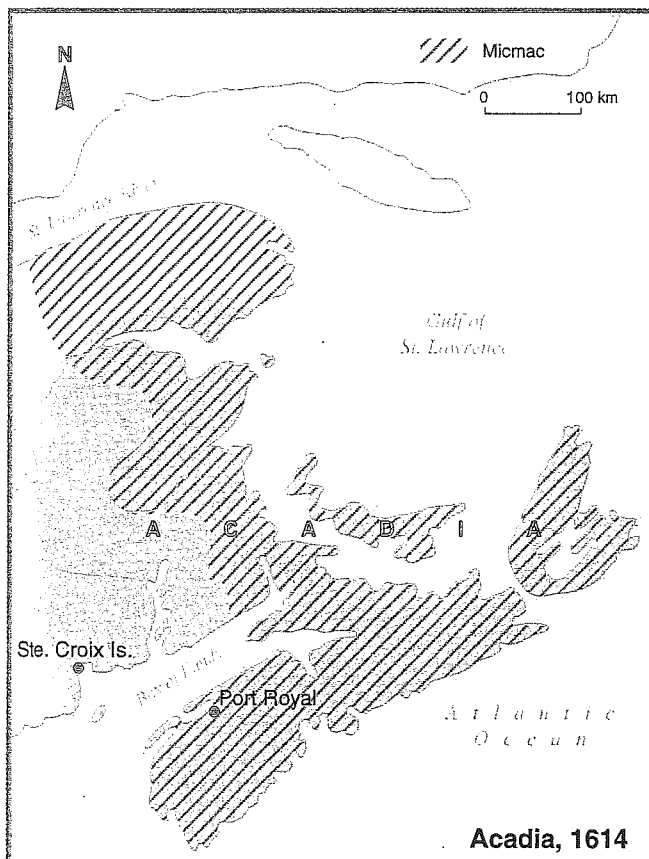
Quebec, Montreal, and Trois Rivières were important settlements in New France because they were profitable fur trading centres. The fur trade was the main source of wealth for France.

Acadia was also a French colony.\* The earliest French settlement attempts took place in Acadia. De Monts and Champlain settled at Ste. Croix and Port Royal before moving to the richer fur areas along the St. Lawrence. French settlement in Acadia continued around the Bay of Fundy.

## Struggle for Control



Although Acadia was not important to the French as a major supplier of furs, its location made it crucial. The English and the French were competing for the rich fish and fur resources in the region. Control of Acadia gave a nation power in North America. It is no wonder that the French and the English, who were competing with each other for power in the New World, also fought for possession of the colony of Acadia.



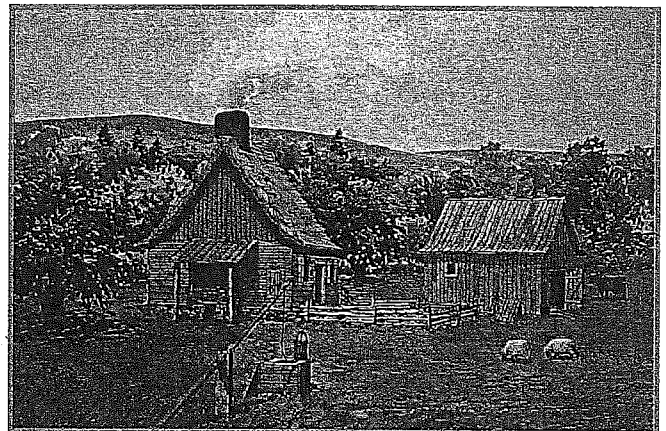
Acadia, 1614

\*Acadia included present day Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and parts of New Brunswick and Quebec.

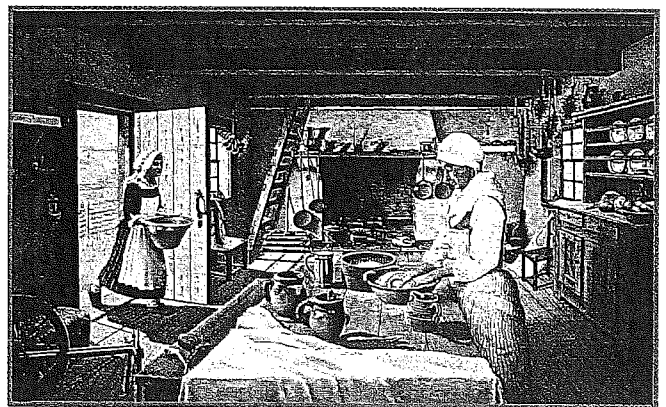
A brief examination of Acadian history between 1614 and 1655 illustrates the struggle for control or power.

- 1614—Because the English feared that the French planned to expand south into the English colonies, they burned Port Royal. Only a handful of French settlers remained. No new settlers arrived until 1623.
- 1621—The English attempted to establish a Scottish settlement in Acadia. It failed after a few years.
- 1632—Acadia was officially returned to the French as part of a peace settlement of a European war between France and England.
- 1654—The English attacked Port Royal again and captured all French settlements around the Bay of Fundy. The English retained control over the southern part of Acadia, while the French controlled northern Acadia.
- 1655—The Treaty of Westminster returned French forts in Acadia to the French.

## Acadian Way of Life



It was not until the 1630s that the first women and families settled in Acadia and large houses such as this were built.



Inside, the whitewashed walls provided a pleasing and warm atmosphere, as did the huge fireplace. Furniture was homemade, as was the clothing the people wore. Since families were large, usually with about nine children, there were always lots of helpers, both indoors and in the fields.

French settlers managed to establish homes and farms in spite of the conflict between the French and the English. Since the land was fertile, farming became the basis of the Acadian way of life. In Acadia there were trees to provide lumber for the building of homes, furniture, barns, mills, and boats. Any leftover crops could be traded for manufactured goods such as woven fabrics, tools, and molasses.

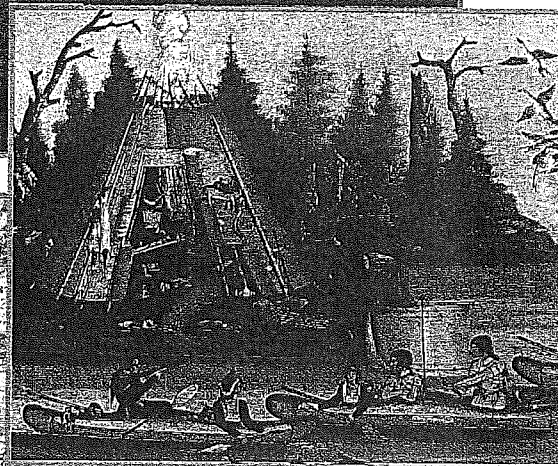
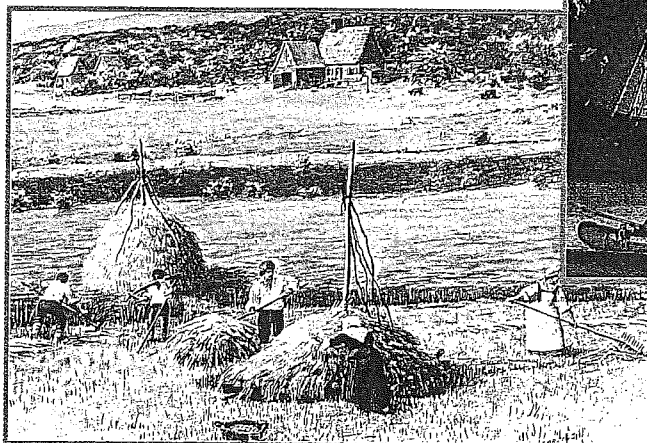
**Top Right:** *Trading.* Very few French ships came to Acadia to trade, so the Acadians traded with people from the Thirteen Colonies—wheat and furs for manufactured goods.



Below: #6663, National Gallery of Canada.

**Above:** *Repairing a Dyke.* The Acadians reclaimed low, marshy lands from the sea. Dykes were built of earth covered with sod. The dykes held back the water so the fields could be dried out and used for farming.

**Right:** *Acadians Cutting Saltmarsh Hay.* Each Acadian family had a vegetable garden, fruit orchards, fields of wheat, hay, and livestock. Hay was cut and dried to feed livestock during the winter.



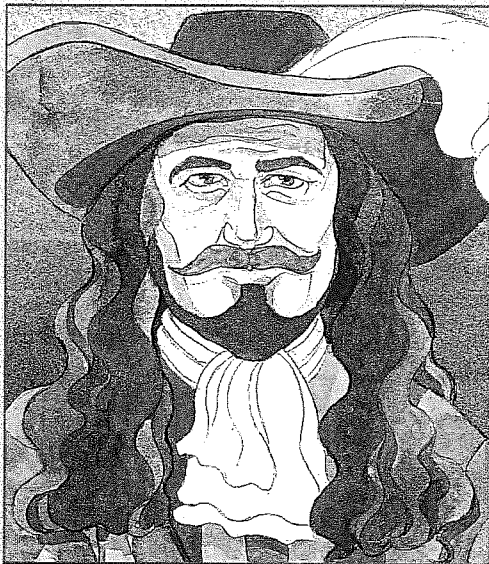
**Above:** The Micmac lived in Acadia for centuries before the Acadians settled in this area. This painting, titled *Micmac Indians*, shows use of the local environment.



# Important Officials in the Government of New France

## The Governor General

- represented the king in New France
- served as a **figurehead**, a living symbol of the king's authority
- was the highest ranking official in New France
- was appointed from the **nobility**
- was chosen from among military officers
- acted as master of New France in the king's name and thus was responsible for military planning, relations with the Native peoples, and ensuring that the other officials did their jobs.



**Comte de Frontenac (1622–1698)**

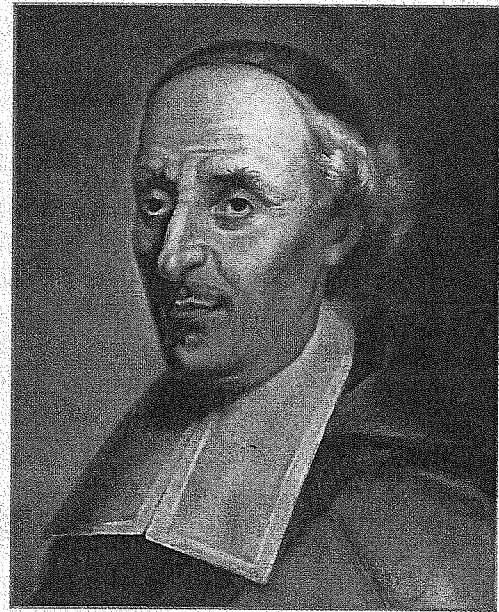
Louis de Buade, Comte de Frontenac, was appointed governor of New France in 1672. He was a successful military governor, but because he quarrelled with the intendant and bishop he was recalled to France in 1682.

Frontenac returned to New France in 1689 to create peace by suppressing the Iroquois and to attack English settlements and finally expand France's fur trade. He remained there until his death in 1698.

Frontenac's major concern was the expansion of New France's fur trade.

## The Bishop

- represented the Roman Catholic Church in New France
- ruled over parish priests and nuns of New France in the king's name
- was in charge of the missionaries, churches, hospitals, and schools
- was often a member of the French nobility appointed by the king
- reported to the king on colonial activities and ensured harmony among his parishes.



**François de Laval (1623–1708)**

François de Laval, a Jesuit priest, arrived in Quebec in 1659. He was appointed the first Bishop of Quebec in 1674. Laval, who directed the spiritual life of New France for 29 years, was very active in attempting to Christianize the Native people.

As a leading member of the Sovereign Council, Laval had strong political influence. He organized the **parish** system of New France. The **seminary** that Laval founded at Quebec became Laval University in 1852.

**Figurehead**—person who is the head of a country in name or title only but has no real power or responsibility. (In New France, the governor was officially a figurehead, but in actual fact he had a lot of power.)

**Nobility**—a person with special rank and authority by virtue of birth or title. Dukes, counts, earls, and marquises are examples of nobility.

**Parish**—district that is the responsibility of a particular church

**Seminary**—special school for the training of priests

## The Intendant

- acted as master of New France in the king's name
- informed the king of colonial activities and ensured harmony among the people
- was appointed from the nobility
- supervised the day-to-day running of the colony, law and order, and matters relating to finance (money).



### Jean Talon (1625–1694)

Jean Talon was the first intendant of New France. During his term, from 1665 to 1668, he conducted a **census** of the population.

Talon attempted to change the colony from a fur-trade foundation to an agricultural and industrial foundation, but found that this could not be accomplished without a larger population.

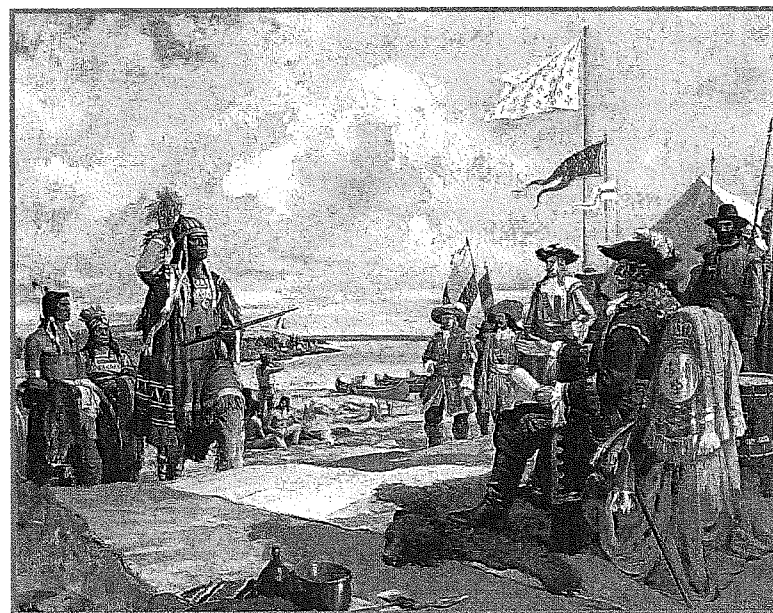
Talon arranged for settlers to come to New France, including over 1000 women known as the *filles du roi* (“king’s girls” or “king’s daughters”). He encouraged further population growth through marriage grants and baby bonuses (money given to a couple when they married and when they had children).

Talon tried to diversify (expand and vary) the economy by introducing new crops such as flax and hops, starting a shipyard and lumber industry, and encouraging mining.\*

## Developing Industries



*Canada's First Shipyard.* Intendant Jean Talon tried to make New France less dependent on supplies from France by establishing industries such as shipbuilding, brewing, and shoemaking. This picture shows Talon studying plans at the shipyard at Quebec in 1672.



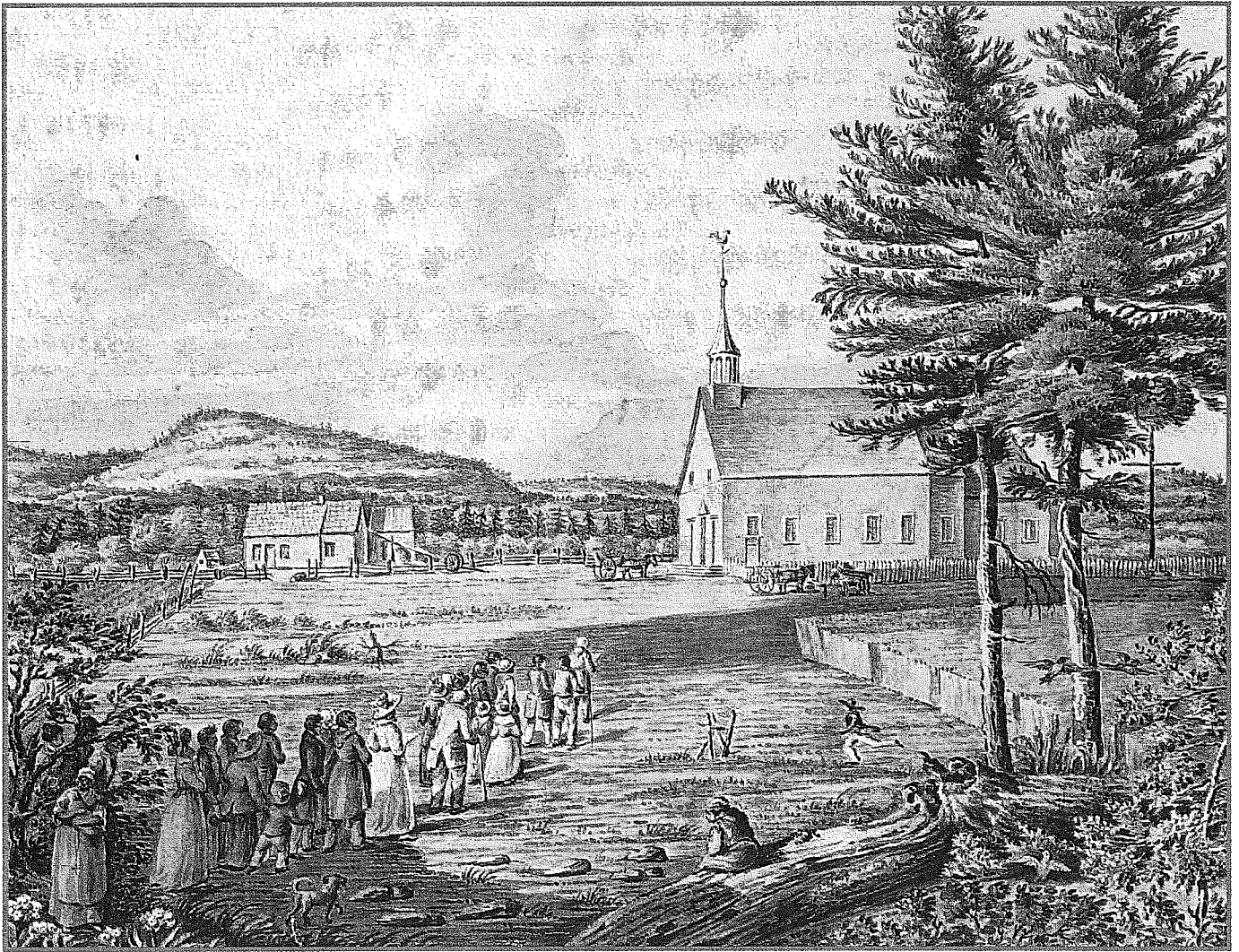
*Canada's First Trade Treaty.* The Comte de Frontenac met with Iroquois chiefs at Catarqui (Kingston), 1673. Frontenac encouraged friendships with the Native peoples, exploration, and military campaigns, all to strengthen New France's most important industry, the fur trade.

**Census**—an official count of the people of a country or district to find out the number of people living there

\*Flax was grown to make a cloth known as linen. Hops are an essential ingredient in making beer.

# The Church in New France

#16648, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.



*Harvest Festival.* The success of crops was vital to the habitants of New France.

The Roman Catholic Church played a very important part in the Royal Colony of New France. Nearly all of the people in New France were Roman Catholic because Cardinal Richelieu and the King of France had passed a law that only Roman Catholics could go to New France.

The role of the Church changed when New France became a Royal Colony. Under the trading companies, the Church had been chiefly concerned with missionary work among the Native peoples. After the campaign against the Iroquois, the number of settlers increased and more priests were needed for the people on the seigneuries and in the towns. Education, hospitals, and charity also became Church business. In today's world, few institutions would attempt to deal with so many different responsibilities. Bishop Laval met these needs by bringing in more French priests and starting a seminary at Quebec in 1663.

The seminary trained boys born in New France for the priesthood.

The Church held a very influential position in the government of the Royal Colony. The bishop was one of the three most important members of the Sovereign Council. This meant that Church opinions were taken into consideration whenever decisions about the colony were being made.

The Church's power in New France was limited by the growing independence of the population. When the Church tried to tithe, or tax, farm goods as heavily as it did in France, the seigneurs and habitants refused to pay more than one twenty-sixth of their yearly produce. This sharply limited the Church's income in New France.



## In the Towns

The three main towns of New France—Quebec, Montreal, and Trois Rivières—were along the St. Lawrence River. They relied on the river for transportation.

Quebec, the oldest of the three towns, was the military centre of New France. The governor of New France lived in the Château St. Louis on the cliffs of the Upper Town, and crafts people and merchants lived in the Lower Town.

Montreal was started in 1642 as a mission to the Huron and Algonquin. By the 1660s it was the centre of the fur trade. Trois Rivières was known for birchbark canoes.

The three main towns each had a church. The church in Quebec was a stone cathedral with an organ and bells. The bishop or another high-ranking priest conducted the mass.

## On the Seigneuries

One of the seigneur's duties was to provide his habitants with a church. These churches were usually small wooden or stone buildings. Each area, or parish, was also supposed to have its own priest. Often there were not enough priests, so one priest would have to travel from parish to parish.

The priests performed many services for the people:

- spiritual service—celebrated mass, heard confessions, baptized babies, performed marriages and funerals
- legal service—drew up wills, recorded business transactions, drew up marriage contracts
- government service—registered births and deaths, acted as government officials, relayed government announcements
- personal service—provided the latest news and gossip from other parishes

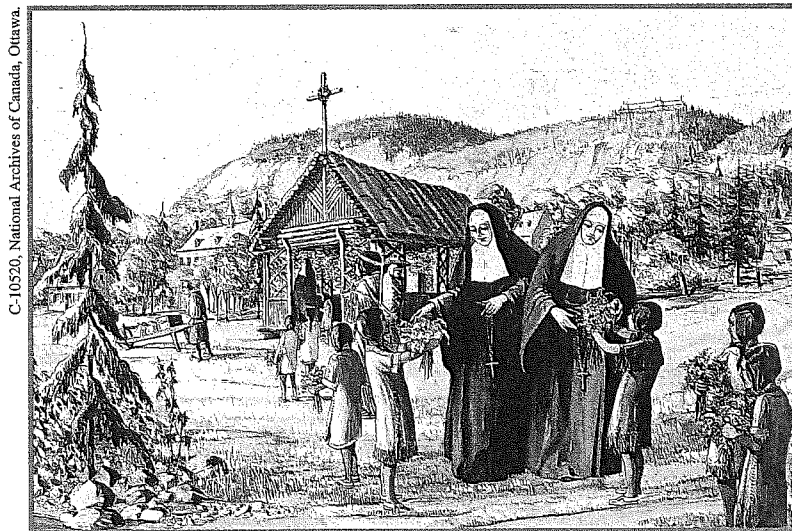
For the habitants, the church was the centre of religious life and much of their social life. The priests provided community leadership and tried to see that the teachings and wishes of the Roman Catholic Church were followed.

## Role in Education

The Church was the only source of education in the Royal Colony. It taught children the Roman Catholic religion, to read and write Latin and French, and to do arithmetic. Many children, especially boys, did not get any schooling at all. In Quebec, Bishop Laval's seminary trained those boys who were planning to enter the priesthood. Boys who were not intending to become priests often remained illiterate because they were needed to work on the farms. The shortage of priests also made it difficult to provide boys with schooling. Girls often received a better education than their brothers.

The Ursuline nuns established schools for young Native and French girls at Quebec and Trois Rivières. In Montreal, a nun named Marguerite Bourgeoys started the same type of school for girls. Some nuns travelled to the seigneuries to teach the children. In 1676, a boarding school was set up for the daughters of rich merchants and colonists.

In most European countries at this time, women were poorly educated, if they were educated at all. European visitors to New France were often very surprised to find that the women of New France were more educated than their husbands.



C-10520, National Archives of Canada, Ottawa.

*First Ursuline Nuns With Children.* In 1640, most children in New France were taught by their parents. These Native children, who were taught by the Ursuline nuns, probably had lessons in the Roman Catholic religion, French, and basic mathematics.

## Role in Health Care

The Church was the only institution in New France that cared for the sick, the elderly, orphans, and people with disabilities. This type of care usually became the work of the nuns. These women worked very hard in very difficult conditions to ease suffering and help the habitants. The Ursuline nuns established the colony's first hospital in Quebec in 1639. In 1659, they established a hospital in Montreal.

### Exploring Further

1. Make a list of all the services provided by the Church in New France. Beside each service, list the government agency that is responsible for that service today.
2. It is 1675. A European pamphlet has just stated that the institutions in New France (the seigneurial system and the Church) are medieval and out-of-date. As an official member of the Sovereign Council, you have been selected to reply to this in a letter.