

A.P. U.S. History Notes:

Chapter 6: "The Duel for North America"

~ 1608 – 1763 ~

I. France Finds a Foothold in Canada

1. Like England and Holland, France was a latecomer in the colony race.
 - a. It was convulsed in the 1500s by foreign wars and domestic strife.
 - b. In 1598, the Edict of Nantes was issued, allowing limited toleration to the French Huguenots.
2. When King Louis XIV became king, he took an interest in overseas colonies.
3. In 1608, France established Quebec, overlooking the St. Lawrence River.
4. Samuel de Champlain, an intrepid soldier and explorer, became known as the "Father of New France."
 - a. He entered into friendly relations with the neighboring Huron Indians and helped them defeated the Iroquois.
 - b. The Iroquois, however, did hamper French efforts into the Ohio Valley later.
5. Unlike English colonists, French colonists didn't immigrate to North America by hordes.
 - a. The peasants were too poor, and the Huguenots weren't allowed to leave.

II. New France Fans Out

1. New France's (Canada) one valuable resource was the beaver.
 - a. Beaver hunters were known as the *coureurs de bois* and littered the land with place names, including Baton Rouge (red stick), Terre Haute (high land), Des Moines (some monks) and Grand Teton (big breasts). (by the way, they drank a lot)
 - b. The French *voyageurs* also recruited Indians to hunt for beaver as well, but Indians were decimated by White Man's diseases, and the beaver population was heavily extinguished.
2. French Catholic missionaries zealously tried to convert Indians.
3. To thwart English settlers from pushing into the Ohio Valley, Antoine Cadillac founded Detroit ("city of straits") in 1701.
4. Louisiana was founded, in 1682, by Robert de La Salle, to thwart Spanish expansion into the area near the Gulf of Mexico.
 - a. Three years later, he tried to fulfill his dreams by returning, but instead landed in Spanish Texas and was murdered by his mutinous men in 1687.
5. The fertile Illinois country, where the French established forts and trading posts at Kaskaskia, Cahokia, and Vincennes, became the garden of France's North American empire.

III. The Clash of Empires

1. King William's War and Queen Anne's War (two different fights)
 - a. The English colonists fought the French *coureurs de bois* and their Indian allies.
 - i. Neither side considered America important enough to waste real troops on.
 - b. The French-inspired Indians ravaged Schenectady, New York, and Deerfield.
 - c. The British did try to capture Quebec and Montreal, failed, but did temporarily have Port Royal.
 - d. The peace deal in Utrecht in 1713 gave Acadia (renamed Nova Scotia), Newfoundland, and Hudson Bay to England, pinching the French settlements

by the St. Lawrence. It also gave Britain limited trading rights with Spanish America.

2. The War of Jenkin's Ear

- a. An English Captain named Jenkin's had his ear cut off by a Spanish commander, who had sneered at him to go home crying (essentially).
- b. This war was confined to the Caribbean Sea and Georgia.
- c. This war soon merged with the War of Austrian Succession and came to be called King George's War in America.
- d. France allied itself with Spain, but England's troops captured the reputed impregnable fortress of Cap Breton Island.
- e. However, peace terms of this war gave Louisbourg, which the New Englanders had captured, back to France, outraging the colonists, which feared it.

IV. George Washington Inaugurates War with France

1. The Ohio Valley became a battleground among the Spanish, British, and French.
 - a. It was lush and very good land.
2. In 1754, the governor of Virginia sent 21 year-old George Washington to the Ohio country as a lieutenant colonel in command of about 150 Virginia minutemen.
 - a. Encountering some Frenchmen in the forest about 40 miles from Fort Duquesne, the troops opened fire, killing the French leader.
 - b. Later, the French returned and surrounded Washington's hastily constructed Fort Necessity, and after a 10-hour siege, made him surrender.
 - c. He was permitted to march his men away with the full honors of war.

V. Global War and Colonial Disunity

1. The fourth of these wars between empires started in America, unlike the first three.
2. The French and Indian War (aka Seven Years' War) began with Washington's battle with the French.
3. It was England and Prussia vs. France, Spain, Austria, and Russia.
4. In Germany, Fredrick the Great won his title of "Great" by repelling French, Austrian, and Russian armies, even though he was badly outnumbered (skill...).
5. In previous wars, the Americans were not unified, but now they were.
6. In 1754, an intercolonial congress was held in Albany, New York.
 - a. A month before the congress, Ben Franklin had published his famous "Join or Die" cartoon featuring a snake in pieces, symbolizing the colonies.
7. Franklin helped unite the colonists in Albany, but the Albany plan failed because it compromised too much.

VI. Braddock's Blundering and Its Aftermath

1. In the beginning, the British sent haughty 60 year-old general Braddock to lead a bunch of inexperienced soldiers with slow, heavy artillery.
2. In a battle with the French, the British were routed.
 - a. In this battle, Washington reportedly had two horses shot from under him and four bullets go through his coat, but never him.
3. Afterwards, the frontier from Pennsylvania to North Carolina felt the Indian wrath, as scalping was everywhere.
4. As the British tried to attack a bunch of strategic wilderness posts, defeated after defeat piled up.

VII. Pitt's Palms of Victory

1. In this hour of British trouble, William Pitt, the "Great Commoner," took the lead.
2. In 1757, he became a foremost leader in the London government.

3. Later earning the title of “Organizer of Victory,” he soft-pedaled assaults on the French West Indies, assaults which sapped British strength, and concentrated on Quebec-Montreal.
4. In 1758, Louisbourg fell after a blistering siege.
5. 32 year-old James Wolfe, dashing and attentive to detail, commanded an army that boldly scaled the cliff walls of a part protecting Quebec, met French troops near the Plains of Abraham, and in a battle in which he and French commander Marquis de Montcalm both died, the French were defeated and the city of Quebec surrendered.
 - a. The 1759 Battle of Quebec ranks as one of the most significant engagements in British and American history, and when Montreal fell in 1760, that was the last time French flags would fly on American soil.
6. In the peace treaty at Paris in 1763, Britain got all of Canada, but the French were allowed to retain several small but valuable sugar islands in the West Indies and two never-to-be-fortified islets in the Gulf of St. Lawrence for fishing stations.
7. France’s final blow came when they gave Louisiana to Spain to compensate for Spain’s losses in the war.
 - a. Great Britain took its place as the leading naval power in the world, and a great power in North America.

VIII. Restless Colonials

1. The colonists, having experienced war firsthand and come out victors, were very confident.
 - a. However, the myth of British invincibility had been shattered.
2. Ominously, friction developed between the British officers and the colonial “boors.”
3. The British refused to recognize any American officers above the rank of captain.
4. However, the hardworking Americans believed that they were equals with the Redcoats, and trouble began to brew.
5. Brits were concerned about American secret trade with enemy traders during the war; in fact, in the last year of the war, the British forbade the export of all supplies from New England to the middle colonies.
6. Also, many American colonels refused to help fight the French until Pitt offered to reimburse them.
7. During the French and Indian War, though, Americans from different parts of the colonies found, surprisingly to them, that they had a lot in common (language, ideals), and barriers of disunity began to melt.

IX. Americans: A People of Destiny

1. Now that the French had been beaten, the colonists could now roam freely, and were less dependent upon Great Britain.
2. The French consoled themselves with the thought that if they could lose such a great empire, maybe the British would one day lose theirs too.
3. Spain was eliminated from Florida, and the Indians could no longer play the European powers against each other, since it was only Great Britain in control now.
4. In 1763, Ottawa chief Pontiac led a few French-allied tribes in a brief but bloody campaign through the Ohio Valley, but the Whites quickly and cruelly retaliated after being caught off guard.
 - a. One commander ordered blankets infected with smallpox to be distributed among the Indians.
 - b. Such violence convinced Whites to station troops along the frontier.

5. Now, land-hungry Americans could now settle west of the Appalachians, but in 1763, Parliament issued its Proclamation of 1763, prohibiting any settlement in the area beyond the Appalachians.
 - a. Actually, this document was meant to work out the Indian problem, but colonists saw it as another form of oppression from a far away country.
 - b. In 1765, an estimated on thousand wagons rolled through the town of Salisbury, North Carolina, on their way “up west” in defiance of the Proclamation.
6. The British, proud and haughty, were in no way to accept this blatant disobedience by the lowly Americans, and the stage was set for the Revolutionary War.

X. Makers of America: The French

1. Louis XIV envisioned a French empire in North America, but defeats in 1713 and 1763 snuffed that out.
2. The first French to leave Canada were the Acadians.
 - a. The British who had won that area had demanded that all residents either swear allegiance to Britain or leave.
 - b. In 1755, they were forcefully expelled from the region.
3. The Acadians fled far south to the French colony of Louisiana, where they settled among sleepy bayous, planted sugar cane and sweet potatoes, and practiced Roman Catholicism.
 - a. They also spoke a French dialect that came to be called Cajun.
 - b. Cajuns married Spanish, French, and Germans.
 - c. They were largely isolated in large families until the 1930s, when a bridge-building spree engineered by Governor Huey Long, broke the isolation of these bayou communities.
4. In 1763, a second group of French settlers in Quebec began to leave, heading toward New England because bad harvests led to lack of food in Quebec.
 - a. Most hoped to return to Canada someday.
 - b. These people also preserved their Roman Catholicism and their language.
 - c. Yet today, almost all Cajuns and New England French-Canadians speak English.
5. Today, Quebec is the only sign of French existence that once ruled.
 - a. French culture is strong there in the form of road signs, classrooms, courts, and markets, eloquently testifying to the continued vitality of French culture in North America.