

# HOW DID THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR IMPACT THE FRENCH?

The Seven Years' War still stirs strong emotions in Québec, even 250 years later. In the chapter opener, “the War of Conquest” was listed as another name for the Seven Years' War. That is because, in Québec, the Seven Years' War is seen as a hostile takeover of the French by a foreign power. **Figure 3.28** shows a cannonball, believed to be from 1759, stuck in a tree on Rue St. Louis in Québec City. Imagine living in New France at the time of the British takeover. How might you have felt?

## TERMS OF FRENCH SURRENDER

The French proposed specific conditions of their surrender in a document called Articles of Capitulation, which they presented to the British. These conditions were intended to protect the future of all residents of New France, including the Canadiens, Acadians, and First Nations. **Figure 3.29** shows the occupation of Québec by British soldiers. What do you think would be important to the French as they negotiated their surrender?



**FIGURE 3.28** This 1759 cannonball remains stuck in a tree in Québec City. **Analyze:** What might the cannonball symbolize for the people who live in Québec today?

**FIGURE 3.29** This painting, entitled *View of the Cathedral, Jesuits College, and Recollect Friars Church, Quebec City, 1761*, is by British naval officer Richard Short and believed to have been painted in 1761 while he was stationed in Québec. **Analyze:** What does this image tell you about the presence of the British in Québec?



Which aspects of French daily life may have changed after the war?

**FIGURE 3.30** British options for dealing with the French and First Nations are listed here. **Analyze:** Which option would have been the best for the peace of all involved?

**assimilate** to bring into conformity or adapt to the customs and attitudes of a group

## LIFE UNDER BRITISH RULE

The British agreed to the terms outlined in the Articles of Capitulation. The conditions were related to the treatment of French soldiers and citizens, property rights, and religion. The British put General James Murray in charge of making sure that his soldiers obeyed this document as they went about the business of rebuilding Québec City and ruling the French.

In the years immediately following the war, the British had to decide how to govern a colony where most of the people were French-speaking and Roman Catholic. The British had several options, which are listed in **Figure 3.30**.

Option	Explanation
expulsion	Force the French to leave.
preservation	Allow the French to keep their laws, language, and religion; allow First Nations to stay on lands reserved for them.
isolation	Create separate areas for French, British, and First Nations to live, where they could have their own governments, religions, and languages.
assimilation	Force the French and First Nations to become British subjects and enforce British laws, language, customs, and religion.
biculturalism	Allow both British and French cultures to co-exist.

With the Royal Proclamation of 1763, the British government began to assert its power over the French by creating new rules for them to live by. This meant that the Catholic Church lost a lot of its power to govern the people and that new British laws replaced French laws. French-speaking Catholics were not allowed to hold positions of power within the government. The British planned to move a great number of British settlers into the area to outnumber the French and make them fit into, or **assimilate** to, the British way of life. Many of the wealthy and educated French people decided to leave for other areas, which left openings for the British to take over businesses, industries, and the fur trade.

## OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

To keep control, the British wanted the French to swear an oath of allegiance to the King of England. This oath was a public declaration of loyalty to the British King. By swearing the oath, the French were promising to be good and loyal citizens and follow the new British rules.

As part of their oath of allegiance, anyone who wanted to hold a position of power within the government had to swear an oath accepting the Protestant faith. This was part of the 1678 *Test Act* in Britain, which was created to ban Catholics from the government. Catholics would have to deny key aspects of their faith in order to hold office. French Catholics in North America were unwilling to do this and so they were barred from important positions of power.



# CAUSE AND CONSEQUENCE

All events, both past and present, have causes and consequences. For example, imagine that you did not do a homework assignment. The cause may have been that you decided to hang out at a friend's place after school instead, or perhaps you simply forgot. The consequence may be that your teacher will not accept a late assignment. A further consequence will be that your class grade falls.

Which of these consequences were intended (planned)? Which were unintended (unplanned)? You may have *planned* on meeting your friend after school. But your class grade falling because you failed to hand in one assignment was *unplanned*. Consequences can also be short term or long term. Not all consequences are equally important over time. If missing handing in one assignment was a one-time event, it likely has only short-term consequences.

When you think about the causes and consequences of a historical event, you can ask the following questions:

- What were the causes of the event?
- Who were the people who influenced the event?
- What were the social, political, or economic conditions that influenced the event?
- What were the ideas and beliefs that influenced the event?
- What were the consequences of the event?
- What were the intended and unintended consequences of the event?

## CASE STUDY: THE CONQUEST

Following their victory in the Battle of the Plains of Abraham in 1759, British soldiers took control of Québec City and the rest of New France. By 1763, 70 000 Canadiens were living under British rule.

Examine some of the consequences of what many people living in Québec today refer to as “the Conquest.”



**Consequence:** By 1760, many homes in Québec City had been burned down and all the public buildings needed repair. Examine the evidence shown in **Figures 3.31** and **3.32**. What would it be like to live in the aftermath of a war?

**Consequence:** The British were English-speaking Protestants, which set them apart from the French-speaking Catholics of New France. The two groups had different laws and customs. The British tried to force the French to assimilate to the British way of life and swear an oath of allegiance to the King of England.

**FIGURE 3.31** *A View of the Bishop's House with the Ruins* was painted in 1761 by British naval officer Richard Short. **Analyze:** What does the painting tell you about conditions in Québec City in 1761?

**Consequence:** In 2009, the National Battlefields Commission planned a 250th anniversary commemoration of the Battle of the Plains of Abraham. The plan called for 2000 people in period clothing and uniforms to re-enact the events. However, threats from separatists (people who want Québec to be a country separate from Canada) and opposition from francophone historians led to the cancellation of the event. What does **Figure 3.33** tell you about the long-term consequences of the Conquest?

“During one night, upwards of fifty of the best houses in the Lower Town were destroyed. The vaults containing merchandise and many precious articles, did not escape the effects of the artillery.”

— Nun (unnamed)

**FIGURE 3.32** An unnamed nun from the General Hospital of Québec described the aftermath of the war. The exact date is unknown. **Analyze:** What is she saying about the conditions in Québec City?

“In Quebec's popular lore, the Battle of the Plains of Abraham is considered the end of francophone autonomy [independence] in North America and the start of British dominance [power]. Canada's heritage minister said he's disappointed the re-enactment was cancelled due to threats from inside the separatist movement. ‘That people threatened violence and it resulted in an event of this magnitude being cancelled I think is a real disappointment.’”

— Toronto Star

**FIGURE 3.33** This excerpt is from the *Toronto Star* newspaper (online), February 17, 2009. **Analyze:** Why was the re-enactment cancelled?

## TRY IT

1. What were the intended and unintended consequences of the Conquest? What were the short- and long-term consequences?
2. The Conquest led to Canada becoming a bilingual country. What might British leadership in the 1760s have thought about this unintended consequence?





## A NEW ORDER

By 1770, the French people understood that their religion, language, and way of life were still under attack as the British continued their attempts at assimilation.

Sir Guy Carleton (Figure 3.34A) replaced James Murray and became Governor of Québec in 1768. Since the French were unhappy with British institutions, Carleton was afraid that they might fight with the enemy if Britain was dragged into another war, which seemed likely. Some settlers in the British colonies were becoming even more unhappy with British rule than the French. Some of the British colonies concluded that it would be better to be an independent country than to continue as part of the British Empire. This made it essential for Carleton to secure the loyalty of the French.

Carleton decided to appoint some Canadiens to government positions and to support the Catholic Church, which played such a central role in their social and religious life. He also believed that many of the French laws relating to civilian life should be restored. In 1770, Carleton travelled to London, England, where he spent four years trying to convince the British government to reform the laws to preserve harmony in the colony. Ontario's Carleton University (Figure 3.34B), founded in 1942, is named after Sir Guy Carleton.

## QUÉBEC ACT, 1774

Carleton's efforts paid off. The British government passed the *Québec Act, 1774*, which returned to the French many of the rights they had lost with the Royal Proclamation. These rights included the following:

- guarantee of religious freedom, which meant that Catholics would be allowed to practise their religion even under a Protestant government
- allowance for Catholics to hold political positions without giving up their religion
- restoration of the French civil law system (relating to the private rights of individuals), while maintaining British criminal law
- restoration of the seigneurial system of land ownership and use
- expansion of French territory, but into lands that were established for First Nations use in the Royal Proclamation of 1763

**FIGURE 3.34** (A) A portrait of Sir Guy Carleton painted in 1923 is shown here. (B) Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario, is named after him. **Analyze:** Why was the university named in honour of Sir Guy Carleton?

Which of these rights do you think would be the most significant to the Canadiens?

The *Québec Act, 1774* still met with opposition. Many Canadiens wanted the government to consist of elected rather than appointed officials. However, the governor and his council continued to rule. Examine the maps in Figure 3.35. Describe how the *Québec Act, 1774* changed the boundaries.

**Boundaries of the Royal Proclamation, 1763**



**Québec Act, 1774**



**FIGURE 3.35** The map on the left shows how the British divided the land as a result of the Royal Proclamation of 1763. The map on the right shows the new boundaries that the British created with the *Québec Act, 1774*. **Analyze:** For which groups were the land changes most significant?

## CHECK-IN

- CAUSE AND CONSEQUENCE** What were the economic, political, and cultural consequences of the Seven Years' War for the French? Which were intended consequences, and which were unintended?
- INTERPRET AND ANALYZE** Review the primary source evidence that was included in this section. What types of artifacts left from the war can help us understand life at the time of the conflict? Give examples. How do these artifacts affect the way that historians learn about this time period?
- HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE** When important decisions were being made about North America, whose voices were heard? Whose voices were not heard? How does this affect what is discussed during decision making?
- COMMUNICATE** Create a series of short postings for a media website in the role of one of the missing voices you identified in question 3. Work with a partner to develop an appropriate word or phrase to identify your postings.