

Louisbourg Lighthouse, 1733
FR CAOM COL C11B 39 110

Foundation

The early efforts at colonization in New France were modest: the French had to cope with the harshness of the climate and of nature, the hostility of the Aboriginal inhabitants, the distance separating them from the homeland and the difficulty of obtaining supplies. The first rudimentary buildings were small forts surrounded by a wooden palisade. Serving as trading posts and sometimes missions, they were most often located at the confluence of the St. Lawrence River and one of its tributaries. Only a few settlements, such as Québec, Montréal and Trois-Rivières, grew in size and population. In the 18th century, there was an attempt at urban development, with plans for street grids, lots and public squares and parade grounds. These plans were drawn up by renowned royal engineers Robert de Villeneuve, Josué Dubois Berthelot de Beaucours, Jacques Levasseur de Neré and Gaspard-Joseph Chaussegros de Léry. Urban planning remained largely a military concern: the towns had a fort, a fortress, one or more batteries, redoubts, and an enclosure. However, the lack of maintenance of the fortifications and the vacillations of the court and the administration in their decisions to construct solid, fortified enclosures often precipitated the surrender of towns and forts at the close of the French period.



New France
NEW HORIZONS

North America by Franquelin

This map, representing all the known territory in North America at the time, shows the various trading posts and settlements created by the French. It also includes an idealized and monumental view of Québec.



Carte de l'Amérique septentrionale [Map of North America],
by Jean-Baptiste-Louis Franquelin, 1688
FR Service historique de la Marine Collection des
71 recueils recueil 66 carte n° 20



New France
NEW HORIZONS



Carte du fort Saint-Louis de Québec
[Map of Fort Saint-Louis, Québec]
by Jean-Baptiste-Louis Franquelin, October 25, 1683
FR CAOM 3DFC 347B

Québec

Champlain's *Habitation* was a simple, wooden fortress-trading post. Québec went on to become the most important cities in Canada, of which it formed the administrative, civil and religious centre. According to Pehr Kalm, a Swedish traveller, in 1749, most of the merchants lived in the Lower Town, while the elite lived in the Upper Town. Québec had the colony's most important buildings: Château Saint-Louis, the Intendant's residence, the Jesuit college and the seminary, Hôtel-Dieu, the general hospital and various convents and churches. In 1754, Québec's population stood at 8,000. Between 1691 and 1709, the king's engineer Josué Dubois Berthelot de Beaucourt had batteries and redoubts built and had the city surrounded with ramparts of stone and earth. In the early 18th century, the authorities decided to put a wall around the city, but work was suspended in 1720 because of the great cost. Louisbourg and Montréal were considered key elements in the territory's plan of defence; Québec however seemed beyond the enemy's reach. After the surrender of Louisbourg in 1745, Gaspard-Joseph Chaussegros de Léry supervised the completion of the wall and the destruction of the old stone enclosure. After a three-month siege and intense bombardment, Québec surrendered on September 18, 1759.



New France
NEW HORIZONS

Trois-Rivières

At the request of Samuel de Champlain, the town of Trois-Rivières was founded by Nicolas Goupil de La Violette in 1634, at the point where the Saint-Maurice River flows into the St. Lawrence. It was a traditional meeting place for the fur trade, hence the hostility of the Iroquois, who attacked the settlement repeatedly throughout the 17th century. The town was the seat of a local government, like Montréal. In 1721, it had 800 inhabitants.



*Veue de la ville des Trois-Rivières en Canada,
Nouvelle-France* [View of the town of Trois-Rivières in
Canada, New France], 1721
FR CAOM 3DFC 464C



New France
NEW HORIZONS



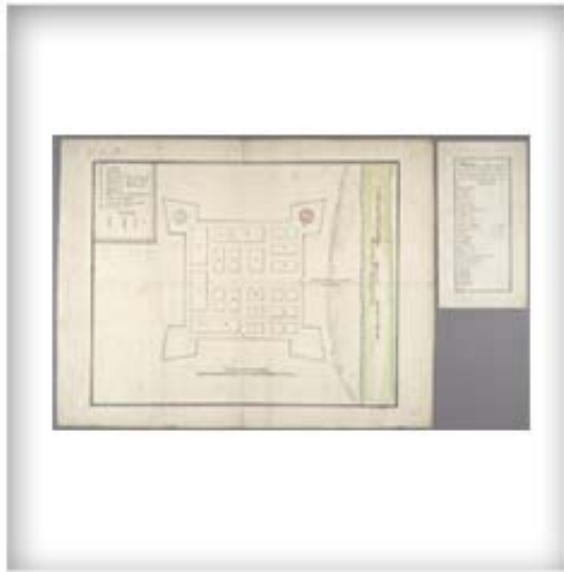
Plan de l'hôtel de Philippe de Rigaud, marquis de Vaudreuil, gouverneur général de la Nouvelle-France, sis à Montréal, dressé par les soins de Jean-Baptiste Angers et René Decouagne, arpenteurs jurés [Plan of the residence of Philippe de Rigaud, Marquis de Vaudreuil, Governor General of New France, located in Montréal, drawn up in the care of Jean-Baptiste Angers and René Decouagne, accredited surveyors], July 17, 1726
FR CHAN Marine C7 340, pièce 13

Montréal

Ville-Marie was founded in 1642, where the waters of the St. Lawrence are at their navigable limit, by a lay missionary organization, the Société de Notre-Dame de Montréal, on the initiative of Jérôme Le Royer de La Dauversière. Although Montréal began as a mission for the evangelization of the Aboriginal inhabitants, its commercial role soon overtook its religious vocation. The town became the trading centre for furs and other goods. It was a supply centre for the posts in the interior of the colony and a departure point for offensive expeditions. From the time of its founding, many defensive enclaves were built as protection against the Iroquois. A palisade was erected between 1687 and 1689; it was replaced by a masonry enclosure, built between 1717 and 1744 according to the plans of Gaspard-Joseph Chaussegros de Léry. The town's extensive perimeter was in the form of an elongated rectangle. With the Treaty of Utrecht, Montréal's military role was strengthened. The surrender of New France, signed in Montréal on September 8, 1760, put an end to the war on the American continent. At that time, the town had 4,000 inhabitants.



New France
NEW HORIZONS



Plan du fort de Détroit [Plan of Fort Detroit], 1749
FR CAOM 3DFC 550B

Detroit

The founding of Detroit dates to July 24, 1701, when Antoine Laumet called de Lamothe Cadillac established Fort Ponchartrain du Détroit, between Lake Erie and Lake St. Claire, in order to strengthen French control over the Great Lakes region, while slowing down the English expansion. The Huron, Outaouais and Miami settled near the fort. The new settlement was located on the edge of Iroquois hunting grounds. Cadillac monopolized the fur trade, and the outpost declined until his departure for Louisiana in 1710. That year, only six families were left on the land and eleven in the fort. In 1749, the new Governor of New France, Roland-Michel Barrin de La Galissonière, impressed by the post's strategic importance, made an effort to attract more settlers. In 1760, Detroit had 825 inhabitants.



New France
NEW HORIZONS



Plan et façades de la porte Dauphine
[Plan and façades of Porte Dauphine], 1733
FR CAOM C 11B 39 n° 41

Louisbourg

After Newfoundland and Acadia were ceded to England by the Treaty of Utrecht (1713), France decided to fortify Cape Breton Island in order to protect Canada, maintain its position on the Atlantic and ensure the exploitation of the abundant fisheries off the coast of Newfoundland. Cape Breton Island became Île Royale. The Secretary of State for the Marine decided to erect a fortress at Louisbourg. The fortified town was designed by military engineers under the direction of Jean-François Verville, according to the fortification theories of the commissary general of fortifications, Sébastien Le Prestre de Vauban. The main defence works were carried out under Étienne Verrier. A large sector was given over to defensive functions. However, since the area's steeply embanked shoreline and the marshes surrounding the fortress were thought sufficient to preclude any attack, the land was not fortified. Beyond its defensive role, Louisbourg soon became an important port, and the hub of exchange for France, the West Indies and Canada. The fortified town included half the population of Île Royale, about 4,000 in 1750, and a large proportion of soldiers were quartered there in barracks. The English took control of Louisbourg in 1745, but Île Royale was given back in 1748. It fell permanently to the English in 1758.



New France
NEW HORIZONS



Fort de Frontenac ou Kataracouy
[Fort Frontenac or Kataracouy], 1685
FR CAOM 3DFC 522C

The Forts

More than 200 forts were built during the French period. Some played a military role; others served as trading and fishing posts, missions or true settlements. All were meeting places and transit points. The forts had to withstand bad weather and enemy attacks from the Aboriginal inhabitants and the English. Most were made of wood, but some, particularly in the east, were made of stone. Their shapes varied widely. The first structures to be built were the storage rooms for dry goods and provisions, then the fort commander's lodgings and various buildings for military use: a smithy, a powder magazine, the men's quarters, the stables and, according to the size of the fort, a chapel or church. The climate inflicted severe damage to these structures, particularly when a fort was abandoned. Fought over by the French and the English, burned and demolished, few forts have survived to the present.



New France
NEW HORIZONS



Plan, profils et élévations du fort de Chambly en Canada avec les projets de le mettre en deffence marqués en jaune, fait à la Rochelle ce 18 novembre 1718 [Plan, longitudinal sections and elevations of Fort Chambly in Canada, with the proposals for defending it marked in yellow, made at La Rochelle this November 18, 1718] FR CAOM 3DFC 499B

Richelieu River Forts

In the mid-17th century, New France was seriously threatened by the Iroquois. In 1665, to repel the Aboriginal peoples and restore the settlers' confidence, Louis XIV sent over the Carignan-Salières Regiment. They built a number of forts on the Richelieu River in order to prevent the Iroquois from using the waterway to attack the settlements of the St. Lawrence Valley. One of the first forts was Fort Chambly, erected in 1665 by Jacques de Chambly, captain of the Carignan-Salières Regiment. It was situated below the rapids, where the Richelieu River forms a basin. The fort was reinforced in 1710-1711. Because of its position, this uniform, fortified stone structure of equal angles blocked access to the navigable part of the Richelieu in the direction of the St. Lawrence, and stood between the enemy and Montréal. In 1665, the Carignan-Salières Regiment also built Fort Richelieu at the mouth of the Richelieu River. It was erected on the site of an earlier fort built by Charles Huault de Montmagny, first Governor and Lieutenant-Governor of New France, and destroyed by the Iroquois in 1647.



New France
NEW HORIZONS



Plan du fort et de la mission du lac des Deux Montagnes
[Plan of the fort and the Lac des Deux Montagnes Mission],
18th century
FR CAOM COL F3 290 n° 73

The Missions

In the 18th century, missionaries concentrated their efforts in the St. Lawrence Valley, where they attempted to induce the Aboriginal inhabitants to adopt a sedentary way of life. What was known as the mission of the *sauvages du Sault* [savages of the Rapids], previously on the Island of Montréal, was transferred, at the request of the Sulpicians, to an area northwest of Lac des Deux Montagnes. The land was granted by the Intendant and the Governor General in 1717 on the condition that the mission be established at the expense of the religious community and that they build a church and fort made of stone. The goal was not just to convert the Aboriginal peoples (the Algonquin, the Nipissing, and the Iroquois), but also to protect the Island of Montréal from Iroquois incursions.



New France
NEW HORIZONS