

by the British government as a base to flank, and if possible to dominate, Louisbourg. The Seven Years' War (1756-1763) that followed, began with an undeclared war between Britain and France that started over the control of the Ohio valley. News of the defeat of the British army before Fort Duquesne (now Pittsburgh) in June 1755, helped to persuade the Governor of Nova Scotia, Charles Lawrence, to expel the 10,000 Acadians, an element in the colony that he believed dangerous for British control. Whether they were in fact dangerous has been much discussed since. The celebrated Acadian expulsion was to be followed later by an even more extensive *diaspora* — the Loyalist emigration from the United States after the Revolutionary war.

General James Wolfe (1727-1759) captured Louisbourg in 1758, and the following year captured Quebec City. Had France been in a position to send reinforcements to Canada in 1760, there is little doubt that Quebec could have been recaptured, for the French still held most of the rest of Canada; as it was, British ships were the first to be sighted in the St. Lawrence in May 1760, and the fall of New France became inevitable. The capitulation of Montreal followed in September 1760.

This final separation between New France and the mother country, the "old" France of Louis XV, was confirmed in the Peace of Paris of 1763. With this treaty France ceded to Britain all of her North American empire except her West Indian islands, French shore-fishing privileges on the Newfoundland coast, and the two small islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon.

Some 60,000 French Canadians and about 1,500 Acadians (who had drifted back) now faced a North America that was British from the Gulf of Mexico to Hudson Bay. A considerable debate has developed in recent years among Canadian historians over the effects of the cession on French Canadians. Some French Canadian historians argue that it had very little effect: that except for the loss of some senior French officials and the substitution of English officials and language at the upper levels of government, nothing much changed. Others, including some English Canadian historians, take the position that the cession was a disaster, making the French Canadians and Acadians a truncated people, cut off from the intellectual and physical resources of their own mother country.

Despite the scorched-earth policy that Wolfe had used ruthlessly in the environs of Quebec in the summer of 1759, the subsequent British military occupation to 1763 and the rule of Governor Murray (1760-1768) was on the whole benevolent. By force of circumstance French civil law was kept, but English criminal law was gradually adopted; both were officially recognized in the Quebec Act of 1774. What complicated matters was the immigration into the new province of Quebec by British Americans, Scots, and other English-speaking people in the 1760s and 1770s. They were to take up the main profit-making venture that Canada had: the fur trade. After the outbreak of the War of the American Revolution, 1775-1783, there was a further movement, this time of displaced farmers and gentry, mainly the former. This necessitated considerable shifts of policy, and it posed to governors like Sir Guy Carleton, Lord Dorchester (1768-78, 1786-96), formidable questions of adjustment between two quite different peoples and their different legal, religious and social systems.

Problems of this kind were partly solved in 1791 by dividing the old province of Quebec into two parts, Lower Canada and Upper Canada, each with its own legislature and legal system. About this time the old province of Nova Scotia was also split up: Prince Edward Island was established as a separate colony in 1769 (it was called the Island of St. John until 1799), and New Brunswick and Cape Breton Island were established as separate colonies in 1784, though Cape Breton was subsequently reannexed to Nova Scotia in 1820. Newfoundland was still nominally a fishing station with primitive jurisdiction and controls, and was to remain so until granted her own representative government in 1832.

2.2.3 Western explorations

To the north and the west of the Canadas lay the chartered territory of the Hudson's Bay Company, founded in 1670, comprising the enormous watershed of all the rivers flowing into Hudson Bay. Across the Rockies lay territory largely unexplored. Vitus Bering had surveyed the Bering Sea, Bering Strait, and part of the Alaskan and Kamchatkan coast for Peter the Great beginning in 1725 and continuing to 1741. The accuracy of his observations was confirmed by James Cook (1728-1779), the first Britisher to explore the west coast of Canada. This he did on his third Pacific voyage in 1776, going as far north as Bering Strait. One of