CANADIAN MILITARY HERITAGE

Volume 1

1000-1754

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ART GLOBAL

Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data

Chartrand, René

Canadian military heritage.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
To be completed in 3 v.
Contents: v. 1. 1000-1754
Translation of: Patrimoine militaire canadien.

ISBN 2-920718-49-5 (v. 1)

1. Canada – History; Military. 2. Armies – Canada – History. 3. Soldiers – Canada. I. Title.

FC226.C4213 1993 355'.00971 C93-096790-9
F1028.C4213 1993

Cet ouvrage a été publié simultanément en français sous le titre
PATRIMOINE MILITAIRE CANADIEN – D'hier à aujourd'hui
Tome 1
1000-1754
ISBN 2-920718-44-4

This work was published at the initiative and under the auspices of
Commununications M.C. Stratégiques
and the Directorate of History, Department of National Defence of Canada.

Project Coordinator: Serge Bernier

Design and Production: Art Global, Montreal

Printed and bound in Canada

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1009 Laurier Avenue W.
Montreal, Quebec H2V 2L1

ISBN 2-920718-49-5
4th quarter 1993

Peace is the dream of wise men;
War is the history of mankind.
Louis-Philippe, Comte de Ségur (1753-1830)
Officer, diplomat, and member of the Académie française.

FOREWORD

It seems natural that Canada's military traditions would parallel those of its European heritage. Canadian soldiers have closely resembled western Europeans for centuries: carrying the same weapons, subject to the same kinds of discipline, dressed in similar uniforms, surrounded by a virtually identical organization, and observing the same code of honour. However, this is only one aspect of our tradition. There is another, less evident side, stemming from the very nature of the Canadian landscape and the presence of peoples who have lived here for centuries. This aspect, based on our perception of the world around us, colours our method of waging battle. From the very beginning, it has distinguished our tradition from its European sources and lent it great originality.

All the native peoples of North America had warlike traditions. Courage, a flair for combat, and skill in handling weapons numbered among the most highly valued attributes of these societies. The first attempts to establish European settlements in Canada were repulsed by Amerindian and Inuit warriors. It was not until seven centuries after the arrival of the first Vikings that small European colonies managed to take root, thanks in many cases to the help of indigenous peoples who struck up trade alliances with the new arrivals.

The British and Dutch colonies in North America were essentially sedentary and were augmented by numerous waves of immigrants. These people, who wanted to re-create the towns and countryside of their native lands in the New World, carved out a domain for themselves the length of the Atlantic coast, which suited their primarily agricultural and maritime purposes. The continental interior was of little interest to them.

This was not, however, the case of the French, who sailed up the St. Lawrence River and penetrated deep into the new land. In 1608 they founded a settlement at Quebec, which would become the strategic key to Canada. In 1642, Montreal was established, and due to its advantageous location at the centre of a network of waterways, it soon became the hub of New France. The French pursued more and more ambitious explorations to the north, south, east and west, thereby coming into contact with Amerindians more than other Europeans. These interactions greatly influenced their way of life.

The French differed most from other Europeans in North America at the time by the extent of their ambitions. Governors such as Champlain, Frontenac, and later Beauharnois, looked forward to the conquest of the entire North American continent. From this point of view, the first colony established on the shores of the St. Lawrence was to become the centre of a vast empire: New France. Despite its low population, one century after the founding of Quebec, this empire already encompassed the Great Lakes region and the Mississippi Valley as far as the Gulf of Mexico. While this immense crescent of territory limited the ability of New England to expand further, the French were already setting off in search of the great sea to the west, the Pacific.

The keys to the success of this vast strategic plan were the militarization of the population, through the creation of a militia and the integration of Canadian officers into the regular army, and the development of new military tactics, strongly influenced by the methods of the Amerindians. New France used these means to keep its enemies at bay and attain the zenith of its power in North America.

Chapter 1

THE FIRST WARRIORS

Canada is immense. It stretches from the Atlantic to the Pacific, encompassing several different time zones. Its climate ranges from temperate in the south to arctic in the north. All of western Europe could fit easily inside this vast territory. It took centuries of explorations – often conducted by military men – to establish precise maps, from the first sketches of sixteenth-century explorers to the great aerial surveys produced by the Royal Canadian Air Force.

The environment has remained practically unchanged for some 3,500 years. From the Atlantic to the western extremities of the Great Lakes, vast forests cover the southern part of the country. Then hundreds of kilometres of prairie stretch ahead, ending only at the Rocky Mountains. The Pacific slope of these mountains is more temperate, with dense forests running along the west coast as far as Alaska. North of the St. Lawrence River, the Great Lakes and the Prairies, the vegetation slowly becomes boreal, shifting into tundra as one nears the Arctic Ocean.

The inhabitable area is limited, at least insofar as agriculture is concerned, to the southernmost parts of the country. Settlement was concentrated there because the subarctic taiga and tundra could not support larger populations. In the Middle Ages, Canada's climate was more temperate. It remained so until the fourteenth century, when the little ice age began, reaching its apogee between the end of the seventeenth century and the middle of the nineteenth. This colder period affected not only Canada but the earth's entire Northern Hemisphere. Agriculture was disturbed and the population, including military people, had to change their ways of eating and dressing and their modes of travel in order to cope with the new conditions, particularly the snow, which posed a major problem to transportation. In the St. Lawrence Valley, where annual temperatures vary enormously, from as cold as -40° C in winter to as hot as +35° C in summer, the European settlers borrowed numerous techniques from the Amerindians for survival

Inuit armed with a bow, around 1577. John White. Contemporary water-colour.

Published with the permission of the Trustees of the British Museum.

in such extreme conditions. This environment influenced their battle methods as well.

Another feature of the vast Canadian territory is the multitude of rivers flowing through it. Until the mid-nineteenth century, waterways provided the only major communication routes, and controlling them was of prime strategic importance to the Europeans from their first arrival. As long as no land routes existed, the only way for explorers to penetrate the great Canadian interior was along waterways. In their attempts to reach the heartland of the continent, they soon adopted the Amerindian canoe, a light and manoeuvrable craft made of birchbark. For many years to come, waterways remained the only practical method of transporting tons of material and hundreds of people over long distances. The first road between Montreal and Quebec City – the Chemin du Roy – was built in the 1730s and used mainly for light transportation. Merchandise and troops continued to travel by water, until railways became sufficiently developed to take over in the second half of the nineteenth century.

The immense distances and sense of space, the rigorous climate and close proximity of untamed nature were all new to the first Europeans arriving in Canada. Today still, Europeans who arrive here are greatly impressed by these vast, virtually uninhabited spaces and the ubiquity of the natural world – its fauna only a gunshot away, so to speak – just as their ancestors were several centuries ago. Nevertheless, the most striking of the experiences awaiting European man in America was not untamed nature, however impressive that might be, but American man.

A Continent Already Inhabited

When the Europeans "discovered" America, they were not stepping onto a continent devoid of all human habitation, but rather a continent where descendants of nomads from Asia had been living for some 12,000 years. The northern part of North

America – the vast plains of the west, the mostly wooded regions of the centre and east, the rocky coast of Labrador from the mouth of the St. Lawrence to the Arctic, or in other words the entire area that would one day become Canada – was inhabited by various peoples constituting almost as many linguistic and cultural groups. The Inuit had arrived in the Arctic as early as the year 1000 A.D. The part of Quebec north of the St. Lawrence River, central and northern Ontario, and large areas of what is now Manitoba and Saskatchewan were occupied by the Algonquin group (Crees, Ojibwas, Algonquins, and Montagnais). The Beothuks inhabited the island of Newfoundland, while the Gaspé Peninsula, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island were the domain of the Micmacs, Malecites and Abenakis. The realm of the Plains Amerindians began west of Lake Winnipeg, Manitoba, where Ojibwas and Plains Cree eventually gave way to Assiniboines, Gros-Ventres, Blackfoot and Sarcees stretching all the way to the Rocky Mountains.

All the latter peoples were essentially nomads, living by hunting and fishing. On the other hand, the Iroquoian group (Hurons, Iroquois, Neutrals, and Tobaccos or Petuns) living in the St. Lawrence Valley, southern Quebec and Ontario, and the western part of New York state, were already sedentary, depending largely on agriculture and living in villages.

Among the peoples of the northeast, the Iroquoians were apparently the most militarized. They were also the only group to have formed associations: the Huron Confederacy, formed around 1440, and the Five Nations Iroquois Confederacy, going back to about 1560. The latter played a prominent role in the history of the French colony in Canada and included the Mohawks, Cayugas, Onondagas, Oneidas and Senecas.

The Iroquois and Hurons lived in fortified villages, surrounded by palisades. These were elaborate defensive works. For instance, the fortification at Hochelaga, on the site where Montreal now stands, was "round and enclosed by three rows of wood, pyramidal in shape, crossed at the top," and about nine metres high. The top of the palisade was covered "with kinds of galleries and ladders to reach them, containing rocks and stones." There was only one gate, which "closed with a bar."[1] Huron villages were also usually well fortified with "four strong palisades of large pieces of wood, all interlaced . . . and 30 feet in height, with galleries like parapets."[2] These types of fortifications were common in Huron and Iroquois villages. Archeological excavations have confirmed that a row of stakes sometimes ran around the outside of the main palisade and that the inside of the enclosure was always round or oval. In general, these buildings bore some resemblance to the wooden forts built in northwestern Europe during the Dark Ages.

Villages of lesser importance and isolated posts were also fortified, though more modestly. One small wooden fort built by the Iroquois was "made of large trees, arranged one over the other in a circle,"[3] so that the surrounding palisade was relatively low. The description of a Huron attack on this little stronghold reveals a few of the methods that Amerindians used to lay seige to enemy camps. The Hurons approached the palisade they wanted to breach, hiding behind large, movable wooden walls. Then they knocked down the largest trees near the palisade so that the trees fell on it. Still shielded by their movable walls, they then attempted to attach ropes to the support pillars and pull them down.

The Iroquoians were not the only native people to erect such imposing fortifications in North America. In the Mississippi Valley, the site of many different pre-Columbian civilizations, numerous forts were constructed by various peoples who had disappeared by the time the white men arrived. Around 1,200 A.D., the great city of Cahokia (near the present city of Collinsville, Illinois) was enclosed by a palisade four or five metres in height, punctuated with numerous guard towers and surrounded by a moat. These fortifications provided protection for a population of about 20,000 people. Recent archeological excavations at the Kitwanga fort on the upper Skeena River in British Columbia have confirmed that the Amerindian nations on the Pacific coast also constructed elaborate fortifications. The building of fortifications was not confined to sedentary peoples. For example, the nomadic Amerindians of the northern Great Plains occasionally erected wooden huts surrounded by small palisades as a kind of temporary fortification.

The fortress of Cahokia. Reconstitution by William Iseminger.
Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site, Illinois.

Amerindian Customs

War played a pivotal role in the lives of all pre-Columbian North American peoples. The best way for young men to win the respect and admiration of other warriors and attract the attention of women was to distinguish themselves in battle. However, the

dogmatic "believe or die" of the European wars of religion was unknown among the aboriginal societies in Canada. The same held true for participation in war parties. Warriors were not subject to rigid discipline. They decided on their own whether they wanted to wage war and could stop at any time if they so desired. The reason was that, for Amerindians, the essence of life rested largely in individual liberty, freedom of belief and the freedom of all beings.

The main cause for war was revenge for wrongs committed by other tribes. Iroquoian conflicts traditionally arose when the families of dead warriors demanded satisfaction. The conflicts could well smoulder quietly for a certain amount of time before erupting in a series of raids, attacks and counter-attacks, all seeking revenge, with the last attack always justified by the previous one. In this way, a climate of virtually incessant hostility and violence was perpetuated between the various nations. Decisions to raise war parties could also be prompted by the dreams of chiefs or war priests, falsely called sorcerers by the white men.

In Amerindian societies, most males became warriors. At a very young age, boys began practising with bows and arrows, spears and slings. They practised hand-to-hand combat and learned to move furtively, to camouflage themselves and terrify the enemy with whoops and cries. In case of hostilities, bands of a greater or lesser size were formed, then divided into squads of five or six men. The warriors who were generally recognized as the bravest were selected as war chieftains, constituting a sort of general staff. They met to discuss and draw up plans for the campaign. Before the battle, they devised a basic strategy, establishing the positions of warriors in the field and the tactics to follow.

All war parties were meticulously planned. First, all men between 15 and 35 years of age were gathered to form the war party. Preference was given to experienced warriors who wanted to participate. However, it was also necessary to deal with

The Cahokia market. Reconstitution by Michael Hampshire.

Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site, Illinois.

Ottawa warrior armed with a shield.

National Archives of Canada (C113067).

young warriors, eager to win distinction, who appeared even though not invited. They too were accepted, though on condition that they bow to the authority of the chief. As the party approached enemy territory, it was sometimes difficult to contain these adolescents whose impetuousness might compromise a surprise attack. Provisions were gathered to sustain the warriors for the entire period of time that the expedition lasted. Part of it was hidden along the way for the return trip. Food was brought along, as well as glue to repair canoes and weapons, spare moccasins, dry paint, weapons, shields and wooden armour.

When they arrived near enemy territory, the warriors abandoned their canoes and continued on foot through the woods. They always walked one behind the other, in "Indian file," the chieftain leading the way followed by experienced warriors and then youths. Between dawn and dusk, they could cover up to 40 km in this fashion, depending on the difficulties encountered. When they approached the enemy, they prepared for battle, smearing their bodies with paint to make themselves look frightening, putting on their armour and taking up their weapons. They then prayed to the Spirits, so that they would look kindly on their endeavours, and set off toward the enemy, taking care not to leave any traces or make the slightest noise.

Even when attacking in bands, Amerindians preferred individual combat. During battle, it was impossible for the chieftains to issue commands and maintain strict control over the combatants. As a result, very few instructions were given. When two fairly large groups of natives joined battle, they launched projectiles first and then fought hand-to-hand on relatively open ground. The first battles between Amerindians and Europeans were also waged in this fashion. However, battles could also take an entirely different form, such as surprise attacks by marauding squads on individual enemy warriors or even on defenceless people. From their first military confrontations

with Europeans, the Amerindians realized the futility of fighting in tight formation against troops that were better armed and accustomed to discipline from European battlefields. Their knowledge of warfare told them that their main advantage lay in greater mobility. They therefore concentrated on surprise attacks and harassment tactics. The eighteenth-century French called this *la petite guerre*, or "small warfare," a term which betrays their condescension even though this method of combat, which we now call guerilla warfare, has proved able to thwart the best-equipped armies in the world.

The offensive arsenal of native warriors consisted essentially of a bow and arrows and a bludgeon. The latter was either a club carved from a single piece of wood, with a slightly curved head ending in a ball; or else a tomahawk, consisting of a wooden handle with a stone solidly attached to the end. Slings were used as well, and less often, spears. Amerindian warriors also possessed defensive equipment, a suit of armour that protected the fronts and backs of their bodies as well as their legs. It was made of "thin white sticks, squeezed one against the other and very tightly woven and interlaced with small cords."[4] Since mobility was a major advantage in war, this equipment had to be light, like the birchbark canoes. The use of armour was very common among Amerindians everywhere in America. It was complemented by more or less imposing shields, sometimes called *rondaches* because they looked like the small, round shields of this name used in Europe in the sixteenth century.

All these weapons were especially useful for battles on open terrain, though they were probably employed for ambushes as well. Amerindian armour was able to withstand stone arrowheads, "but not [the French arrowheads made of] iron,"[5] and certainly not bullets. Increasing use of European firearms caused it to disappear. Shields, however, remained in use throughout the seventeenth century among several Amerindian nations, particularly the Hurons, Iroquois, Montagnais and Algonquins. Sometimes coats of arms were painted on the armour and shields.

Amerindian wearing armour.
National Archives of Canada (C113065).

Attack on a fort during a battle between two Amerindian nations.
National Archives of Canada (C92245).

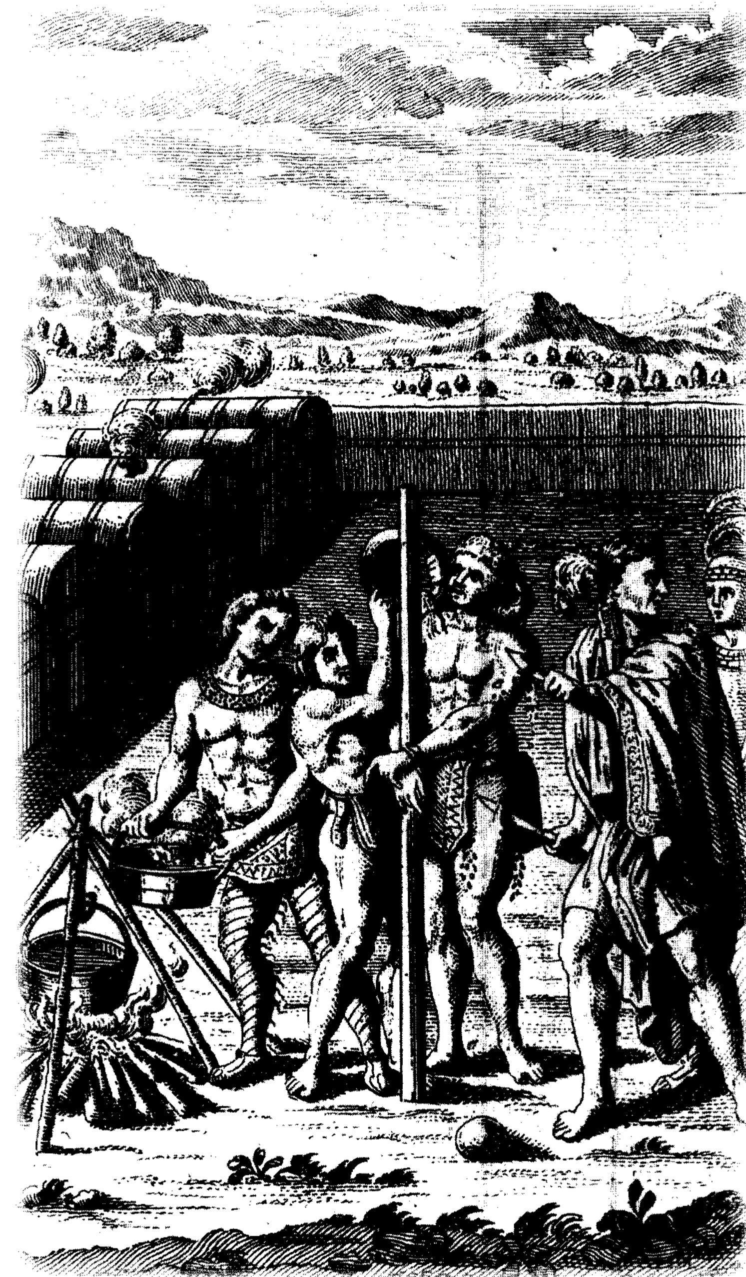
Among the Hurons, these coats of arms indicated the village from which the owner came. For example, a canoe was painted on equipment from the village of Quieunonascaran.

Ritual Acts of Retribution

Although, among some Amerindian peoples, simply "touching" one's enemies without killing them was sufficient to prove a combatant's courage, one of the main objectives of war was to capture warriors from other camps and bring them back alive. The captives knew what awaited them and stoically bore their torments, sometimes for several days. Torture was considered by most Amerindian societies to be a ritual act of retribution, and as such, was utterly beyond the comprehension of seventeenth-century Englishmen and Frenchmen.

The torture of their captives by Amerindians has been the subject of countless tales for 500 years – tales that are usually unbearable to read due to their outstanding cruelty. Did not the Iroquois and Sioux go so far as to crucify captive children? Once again, distinctions have to be made. Even among the Iroquois, where ritual torture was most widespread, many prisoners did not finish their days at the stake but were simply adopted by the families of their enemies and thereafter enjoyed the same privileges as other members of the family. The Abenakis, for their part, preferred to make slaves of their prisoners rather than roasting them to death over low fires.

Ritual torture of a prisoner of war.
National Archives of Canada (C5431).



Another Amerindian practice that was anathema to Europeans was cannibalism. Sometimes Amerindians ate the hearts or other body parts of enemies whom they considered to have been especially courageous in the face of suffering and death, instead of simply throwing them out, in order to appropriate this courage and because they thought these enemies were worthy of being perpetuated in this way. If this macabre custom appears to have made some sense in certain cases, sheer madness seems to have taken over on other occasions. One unfortunate prisoner was unceremoniously disembowelled so that the Amerindians could drink his blood and eat his heart while it was "still warm."[6] The custom of scalping, or cutting the scalp and hair off enemies, is apparently very old. As early as 1535, an explorer in Hochelaga remarked on seeing "skin from the heads of five men."[7] This practice was very widespread among both the forest and Plains Amerindians. Scalps were apparently considered to be war trophies. When wounded enemies were scalped, they had little chance of survival. The Amerindians preferred to sever the entire heads of vanquished warriors, but cut off only the scalps if they had too much to carry. Such was supposedly

the origin of this horrifying custom.

Horrifying at least in the eyes of the Europeans, who loudly condemned this practice. However, a double standard was evidently at work during the colonial wars. Beginning late in the seventeenth century, the authorities in New England offered large rewards for the scalps of their enemies. The French, finding rewards thus placed on their own heads, responded in kind, although their bounties were only one-tenth of the value of those offered by the British. Usually, they preferred to spend their money buying back from the Amerindians white people who had been captured. In the end, white combatants on both sides took up scalping. And so, despite their official protests, the colonial authorities perpetuated this practice, all the while reviling the Amerindians for it.

Sixteenth-century engraving showing the horrors committed by "civilized" Christians on their fellows in Antwerp on November 8, 1576. Similar scenes were repeated throughout the European Wars of Religion.

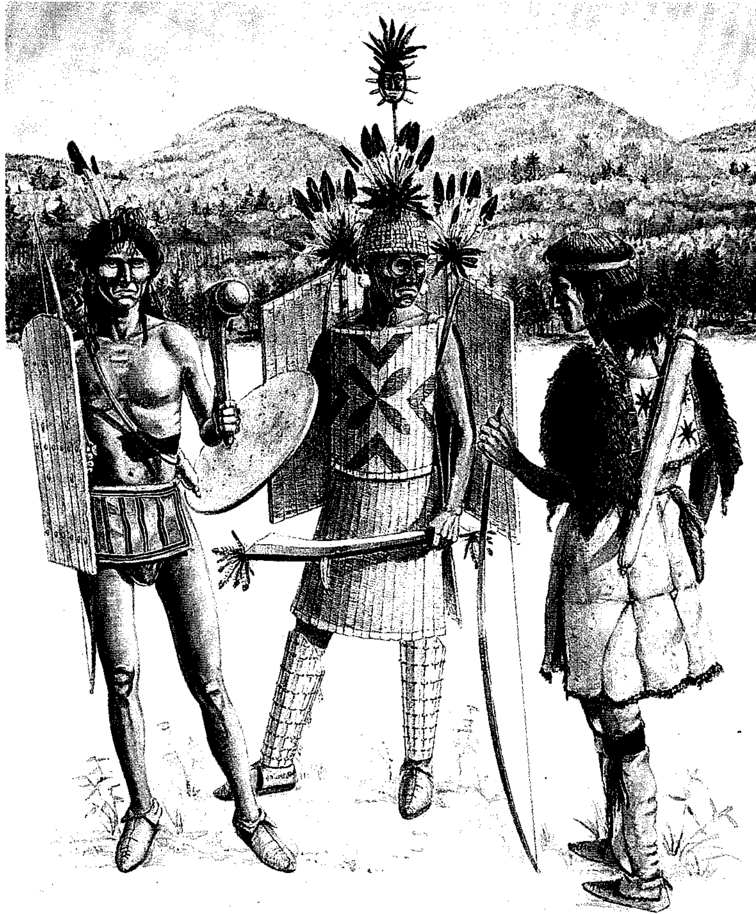
Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence.

Clothing and Adornment

At the time of the first contact with Europeans, the clothing of most Amerindians in the eastern forests was relatively simple. In summer, they went naked to the waist, wearing a sort of loincloth that passed between their legs, attached at the waist by a belt. They were shod in moccasins of soft leather, and sometimes wore long leggings fastened at the

waist. In winter, they wore fur garments with long sleeves. All their clothing was cut from animal skins which women tanned, finished and sewed.

"Mainly when they went to war," Hurons wore headdresses "made of moose hair, painted red, and glued to a leather band about three fingers wide."[8] In the same circumstances, the Iroquois wore a kind of helmet consisting of a thin wooden headband with a hoop passing over the middle of the head with small sockets attached to hold feathers, whose length distinguished chiefs from simple warriors.[9] Other Amerindians tore out "all the hair on their heads, with the exception of a little tuft"[10] which they let grow and adorned with coloured feathers. In order to make themselves look frightening, Hurons and Iroquois applied various colours to their faces. In some cases they also had multicoloured tattoos on their bodies, often for religious and traditional reasons but also in order to terrify people who were not accustomed to them.



Sixteenth-century Amerindian warriors from central Canada. Three types of costumes common to all Amerindian tribes are shown. Reconstitution by David Rickman. Canadian Department of National Defence.

The Encounter with the Vikings

According to the first European explorers, all the various peoples scattered across America had warlike traditions. The oldest known accounts, the Icelandic sagas, recount the mostly conflictual encounters between the Vikings and the natives around the year 1000 A.D. Long believed to be simply legends, the tales that make up the *Saga of the Greenlanders* and the *Saga of Eric the Red* were

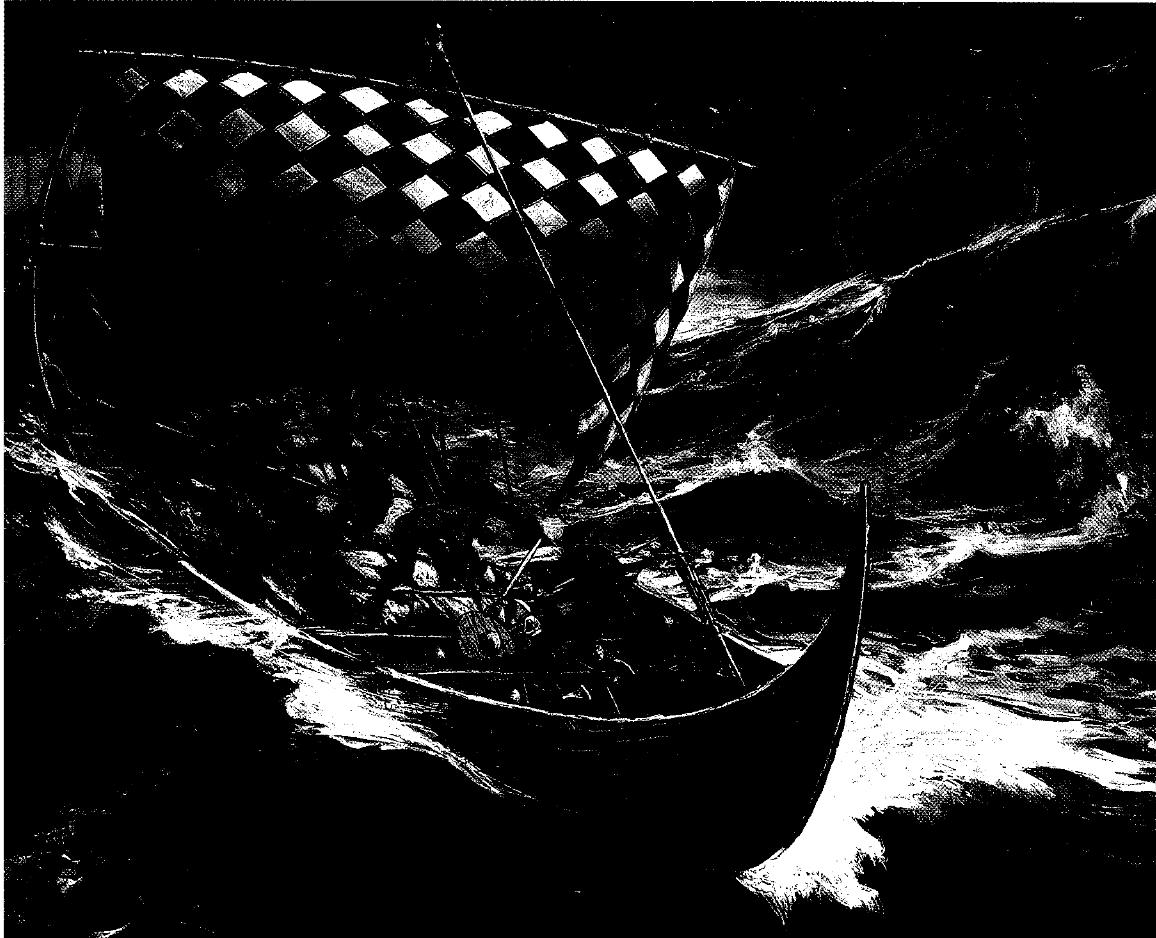
confirmed a few decades ago by important archeological discoveries, especially that of a Viking settlement in l'Anse aux Meadows at the tip of Newfoundland's northern peninsula. It would seem indeed that this was the Vinland of the sagas.

To what group did the indigenous warriors who were audacious enough to attack Viking colonies belong? Some indications would lead one to believe that they were Inuit, and others, that they were Amerindians. The Scandinavians called them *Skraelings*, a word which encompassed all indigenous peoples without distinction. The *Saga of Eric the Red* described the natives as short in stature, dressed in skins, with dark complexions and stiff hair, large eyes and prominent cheekbones. Were these natives inhabiting Vinland (today's Newfoundland and part of eastern Quebec) around the year 1000 the ancestors of the Beothuks and Algonquins of the historical period?

According to the *Saga of the Greenlanders*, a Viking attack on nine natives, whom they had found lying under their three boats made of skins, marked the first exchange between the two peoples. Only one of the Skraelings escaped the massacre and managed to flee. In general, the Vikings took no prisoners unless they had some purpose in mind. One of their most formidable practices was the *strandhogg*, or a kind of raid that they conducted on coastal villages in order to seize

Viking warrior around the year 1000. The cape is fastened by a pin similar to that found at l'Anse aux Meadows, Newfoundland. Reconstitution by Louis S. Glanzman.
National Geographic Society, Washington.

Viking ships around the year 1000. Reconstitution by Louis S. Glanzman.
National Geographic Society, Washington.



livestock and food. They also carried off young girls and strong children to sell them as slaves. Other inhabitants who did not succeed in fleeing were often massacred on the spot. It was possibly a strandhogg to which the nine Skraelings fell victim. Shortly thereafter, other indigenous people came in "large numbers of boats made of skin" to attack the Viking ship. They were armed with bows which they used skillfully, killing Thorvald, the Viking leader, with an arrow. Despite this confrontation, the Vikings remained

another two years in Vinland before returning to Greenland.

Some years passed and another Viking colony, composed of sixty men and five women with some livestock, was established in Vinland under a leader named Karlsefni. Shortly after their arrival, Skraelings emerged from the forest. They wanted to exchange furs for weapons, but Karlsefni strictly forbade the Vikings to do this. The furs were therefore exchanged for red cloth, which the natives wrapped around their heads as a kind of headdress. These friendly relations turned sour when a native was killed for trying to steal weapons. A battle ensued, and according to the *Saga of Eric the Red*, the Skraelings came armed this time with slings as well as bows and arrows. Projectiles "rained down like hail on the Vikings." The natives also used a curious spherical object, blue-black in colour, which they threw into the enemy camp with the help of a thin pole. As it fell from the sky, the object spun, making a hideous noise. Struck with terror, the Vikings believed themselves surrounded and thought only of fleeing for their lives. Seeing the Viking rout, Karlsefni's wife, Freydis, seized the sword of one of the men who had been killed by a flat stone to the head, and turned to face the natives. Her courage rallied the Viking forces, who succeeded in turning the tide. Nevertheless, the colonists decided that their situation was untenable as a result of this battle and, shortly thereafter, abandoned the village.

Although very brief, these tales from the sagas corroborate several pieces of information about the military arts of the Skraelings. They were apparently quite well organized militarily because they could mobilize large numbers of warriors in a short time. They were courageous, for they were prepared to attack an unknown people on ships or inside a settlement. It seems likely that courage in battle was one of the main values in their culture. They were very mobile, due in large part to the lightness of their boats. They were also capable of rapid retreat, which was not necessarily the defeat and rout that the Vikings thought it. As the Europeans were to learn over centuries of battles with the natives, lightning attacks followed by quick withdrawals were typical of the Amerindian method of waging war.

Finally, they handled their weapons extremely well and even displayed a knowledge of the psychology of combat because they invented and utilized objects intended to terrify the enemy, like the blue-black balls thrown at the Vikings with the expected results. Furthermore, the Vikings do not seem to have discovered the location of the Skraeling bases or villages, while the natives were able to locate the European settlements quite quickly. This reveals the existence of an effective surveillance system.

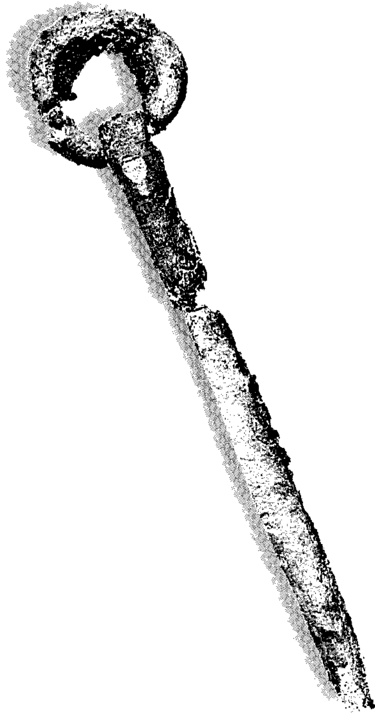
The Skraelings may well have been the first natives in North America to encounter white men, nearly a thousand years ago. The invaders belonged to one of the most aggressive and warlike peoples of the

Fragments of a coat of mail on the right, and iron rivets on the left. Part of a bowl and the arm of a scale with bronze hinges. Objects of Viking origin found during excavations on Ellesmere and Baffin islands.
Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull.

Dark Ages in Europe. Intrepid seafarers, the Vikings landed on the North American continent after many long journeys. Seeking adventure on the high seas, they had set out westward, toward the unknown, reaching Iceland around 860. They began to colonize that island at the end of the ninth century, and it was from there that Eric the Red set sail in 982 to discover Greenland, where two colonies were established. A few years later, a ship commanded by Bjarni sighted a new land to the west: the Canada of today. Bjarni was soon followed by Lief Erickson, who sailed along the coasts of "Helluland," "Markland" and "Vinland," which may have been respectively Baffin Island, the coast of Labrador, and Newfoundland. The discovery of Viking ruins at l'Anse aux Meadows, Newfoundland, have confirmed that attempts to establish small colonies did indeed occur.

Viking Weaponry

The weapons of Viking warriors were more or less elaborate, depending on an individual's wealth. However, all warriors were well equipped with offensive weapons. First were battle-axes, which



Bronze pin from around the year 1000, found during excavation of the Viking settlement at l'Anse aux Meadows, Newfoundland. Cloak pins of this type were very popular among the Vikings.
Canadian Parks Service.

they wielded with formidable effect. At the outset, they were the only people to use these weapons, although their adversaries soon adopted them. Swords were also highly prized, and spears were widely used. Finally, every warrior carried a knife in his belt. Bows and arrows were also used. The sagas report that Viking colonists in Vinland carried swords, axes and spears. They do not mention any archers in their ranks.

The main pieces of defensive equipment were shields. Every warrior had one. Round and made of wood, they were sometimes covered with leather, painted red and ringed with metal. At the centre was the umbo, a sort of iron boss to protect the hand. Most warriors probably had helmets as well. Usually very simple and conical in shape, they often had a piece covering the nose. Horns, which can generally be found in modern depictions of the helmets of these terrible northern warriors, are a figment of popular imagination. Viking helmets were never adorned with horns.[11] Coats of mail were seldom worn, because of their high cost. Probably only leaders and the wealthiest individuals could afford them, unless they had been seized from enemy soldiers. However, coats of mail evidently made their way as far as America, as witnessed by two fragments dating respectively from the eleventh and twelfth centuries that were discovered during recent archeological excavations in northwestern Greenland and eastern Ellesmere Island. Coats of mail and helmets were made of iron.

Viking clothing consisted of a tunic, woollen trousers, shoes of soft leather, a belt on which was slung a sheathed sword, and perhaps some headgear. When the weather was cold, a woollen cape was added, attached at the right shoulder by a large metal pin.

The Withdrawal of the Vikings

Were the Vikings forced to abandon America by the conflictual nature of their first contacts with indigenous populations? The natives were certainly numerous, and the intruders, despite their iron weapons, had little hope of defeating them. As the *Saga of Eric the Red* says, the Vikings in Vinland "realized that even though this was good land, their lives here would always be dominated by battle and fear." They decided therefore to return home – and thus the first armed European incursion into Canada was repulsed. After the failure of the Viking attempts at colonization, another 500 years would pass before another wave of explorers arrived from the Old World.

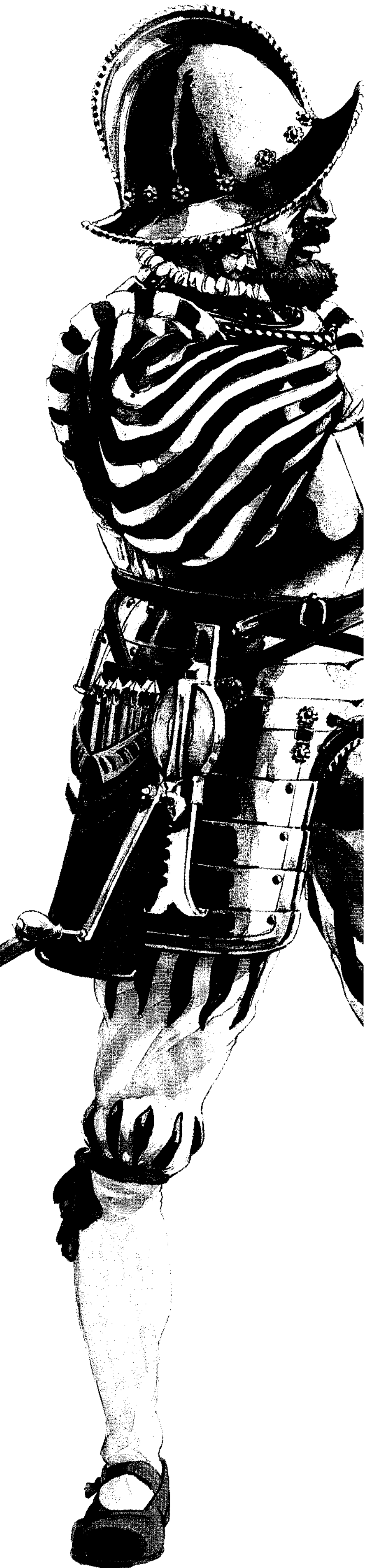
Chapter 2

SOLDIERS OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

Shortly before the end of the fifteenth century, the lure of unknown lands to the west was again felt in Europe, and America was rediscovered. Europeans sought once again to establish colonies throughout the sixteenth century: the Spanish and Portuguese primarily in South America, and the English and French principally in North America. Of all these nations, only the Spanish succeeded in making large encroachments. Numerous expeditions set out for Canada during this period, from the one by John Cabot in 1497 to that of Jacques Cartier, but no permanent colony was established. Canada therefore remained the exclusive domain of the natives until the seventeenth century. Nevertheless, the land claims made by Cartier in the St. Lawrence Valley were recognized in Europe, where the territories that he discovered were identified on maps as New France.

It would have been unthinkable for these intrepid explorers to set out in search of unknown lands, inhabited possibly by natives of unknown disposition, but presumably hostile, without ensuring a minimum of security through effective weapons and men who knew how to handle and maintain them. Therefore, the sailors from all the European nations who signed on for these expeditions had to be able to become men-at-arms when danger threatened. All ships were equipped with a supply of swords, spears and harquebuses, as well as a few artillery pieces. The distinction between naval vessels and merchant vessels was rather vague. In general, ordinary ships engaging in trade one year could be equipped for war the next and sent off on military campaigns, then reassigned once again to transporting merchandise. A few notable exceptions did exist, such as the *Great Harry*, a large British man-of-war.

Thanks to the development of ships able to withstand long ocean voyages, sixteenth-century Europeans enjoyed a revolutionary advantage over all other peoples of the times. Not only did



French crossbowman around 1541-42, wearing the white and black livery of the members of the Cartier and Roberval expedition to Canada. Reconstitution by Michel Pétard.
Canadian Department of National Defence.

America come within their reach, but they also succeeded in circumnavigating Africa. The Portuguese, who were dominant in this kind of exploration at the time, reached India in 1500, and then the Far East.

From Footmen to Soldiers

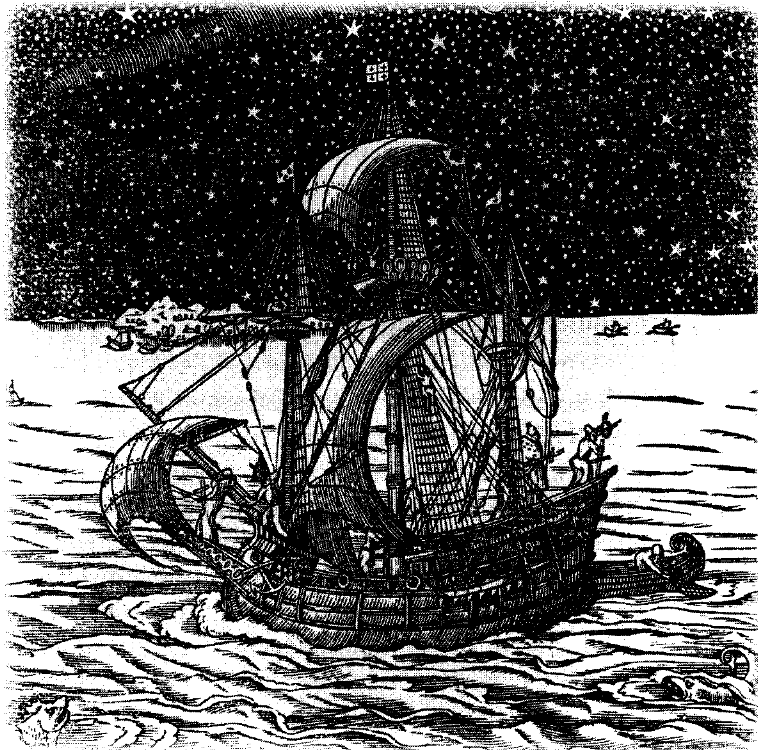
Great advances were also made in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in the areas of weapons and tactics. The result was the advent of a new type of men-at-arms: professional soldiers. In the Middle Ages, knights were the prototypical warriors on the battlefields of Europe. Because of their extremely heavy equipment, they moved about on horseback. Dressed first in coats of mail and helmets, they were eventually enveloped from head to foot in suits of steel armour. Those who fought on foot, or footmen as they were generally known, were usually archers and pikemen. They were poorly equipped and were even forbidden to carry the weapons of gentlemen, such as swords, which might have saved their lives in combat. They had little defensive equipment, even though they were very exposed in battle.

The situation changed when armies of knights began to suffer stinging defeats at the hands of simple footmen. This occurred in the fourteenth century during a number of battles pitting knights against bands of rough Swiss mountaineers armed only with longbows, crossbows, long pikes and halberds, which are pikes with axe-heads such as those still carried today by the Pope's Swiss Guards. Assembled in close formation, the pikemen and halberdiers formed a kind of gigantic porcupine which the knights and their mounts proved unable to penetrate. The nobles suffered terrible losses, while the Swiss acquired a military fame that accompanied them for centuries, due to this new technique that revolutionized the art of war.

The fourteenth century also saw the advent of firearms on battlefields, in

the form of heavy bombards, the ancestor of cannons, which were especially useful for sieges. It was not until a century later that harquebuses, the first portable firearms, made their appearance. They were capable of penetrating armour.

In the Middle Ages, knights and noble lords regularly maintained in their retinues "sergeants" and "archers," who trained and led other subjects who were obliged to serve in the army for forty days per campaign. As the infantry became the heart of the army, the importance of footmen increased, as did their relative numbers and the length of time they had to serve. Rarely paid, these men often survived by looting and extorting money and goods from humble people living near the battlefields. When the military campaign ended, some of them became veritable public dangers. They were even called "looters and eaters of the people." In order to mitigate these abuses, princes gradually began to pay men to devote themselves to the practice of war. The French word *solder* meaning "to pay" was thus the origin of the "lovely name of soldier"[12] by which they came to be known. In the fifteenth century, the practice of paying men to take up the trade of soldiery became widespread.



Sixteenth-century galleon. National Library of Canada (NL18025).

Harquebusier between 1530 and 1540. Reconstitution by Eugène Titieux. Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence.

The Enlistment of Soldiers

In the sixteenth century, the basic tactical unit was the company. It consisted of a variable number of soldiers, usually around 50 though sometimes many more. They were commanded by officers: a captain, assisted by one or more lieutenants and an ensign to carry the flag. While senior officers generally came from the lower nobility, petty officers were drawn from the ranks of the more experienced or better-educated soldiers. These were the *anspessades,* (roughly the equivalent of modern lance-corporals or first-class soldiers) the corporals, sergeants and quarter-master sergeants. There was at least one

Drummer between 1530 and 1540. Reconstitution by Eugène Titieux.
Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence.

drummer and often a fife player per company, as well as a "frater" whose duty it was to provide first aid to the wounded. Companies could be composed exclusively of pikemen, crossbowmen or harquebusiers, or of a mixture of these specialties. Apart from the names of certain ranks and from changes due to evolving weapons, the companies constituted five hundred years ago were similar in many ways to those of today.[13]

During the Renaissance, it was incumbent upon captains to recruit the men they needed to fill the ranks, although they could delegate this task to representatives – lieutenants or recruiting sergeants – who made the first approaches. When agreement was reached, the recruits found themselves bound to a captain by contract (which was sometimes oral), and they received a bonus paid to them at the time of their enlistment.

New recruits had to swear to abide by the Articles of War, which set forth their duties and obligations, especially loyalty to the flag, and warned of the consequences that awaited in case of mutiny or desertion – usually capital punishment. When soldiers received their pay, the captain would have already made certain deductions to cover the costs of their gear and weapons, if they did not have any. Officers usually made a profit on this transaction. Similar deductions were made for food and clothing. If, however, recruits arrived armed, equipped and dressed, various clauses in the contract would change to their advantage. Soldiers being sent overseas were apparently usually granted certain privileges to cover the cost of their gear, which amounted to a form of compensation.

Soldiers of the Canadian Expeditions

Until the mid-seventeenth century, expeditions to Canada were not protected by detachments of royal troops but by men recruited by the trading and exploration companies financing the operation. In order to recruit soldiers, these companies, whether British or French, had to obtain the permission of the sovereign, a condition that also applied to the right to have cannons made to wage war. The companies assumed the full costs of the expeditions, including those for recruiting, equipping and maintaining troops, in exchange for an exclusive monopoly, for example to the fur trade. The leader of an expedition also received a royal commission as a lieutenant-general, or governor, which gave him the authority to act in the

Pikeman between 1530 and 1540. Reconstitution by Eugène Titieux.
Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence.

name of the king in the affairs of the colony. Expeditionary leaders were often important shareholders in the enterprise.

Who then were the soldiers who protected the expeditions to Canada? Many, if not most, were likely veterans of royal armies who had already taken part in several campaigns. The composition of the first military corps sent to North America was probably similar to that of the corps sent by the Spanish to the south. There were "soldiers among [them] who [had] served in several parts of the world, in Constantinople, throughout Italy, and in Rome . . .,"[14] wrote one of them. In times of peace, especially, these demobilized soldiers roamed the various kingdoms of Europe looking for a chance to enlist, and overseas adventure was certainly not to be disdained.

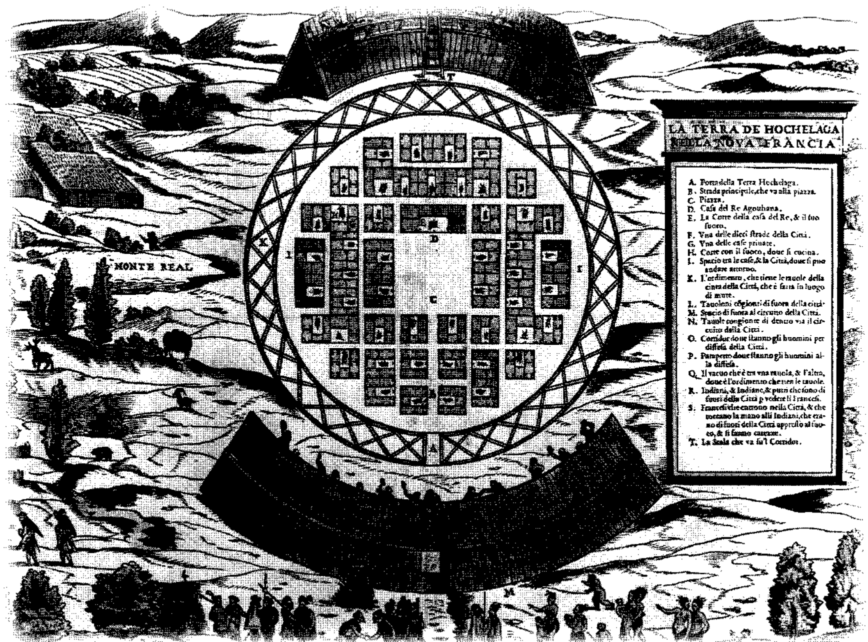
Soldiers were not the only men-at-arms attracted by these expeditions to America. Gentlemen joined in the explorations as well in the hope of finding gold or procuring land. Cartier took some along on his ships in 1535 and in 1541-43. In some cases, there were quite a few of them. For example, on Martin Frobisher's second expedition in 1577, there were "eleven other gentlemen"[15] in addition to the regular officers. They were usually seen as extra hands on the trip, whose swords and knowledge might prove useful.

Sixteenth-century documents are usually rather vague about the presence and number of soldiers on expeditions. In 1504, a French galleon sailed for Brazil. It was one of the first times that France sent men overseas. While documents about this voyage do not mention the occupation of all sixty people on board, they do report that they were well armed, with some 40 "harquebuses and other firearms," without counting pikes, halberds or daggers. One entry, according to which "Jacques l'Homme, called La Fortune, soldier"[16] and a sailor were abducted by the Amerindians, shows that there were men-at-arms on board.

The Soldiers of Cartier and Roberval

On his first voyage in 1534, Jacques Cartier apparently did not take along any professional soldiers or gentlemen

Hochelaga around 1535.
National Archives of Canada (C10489).



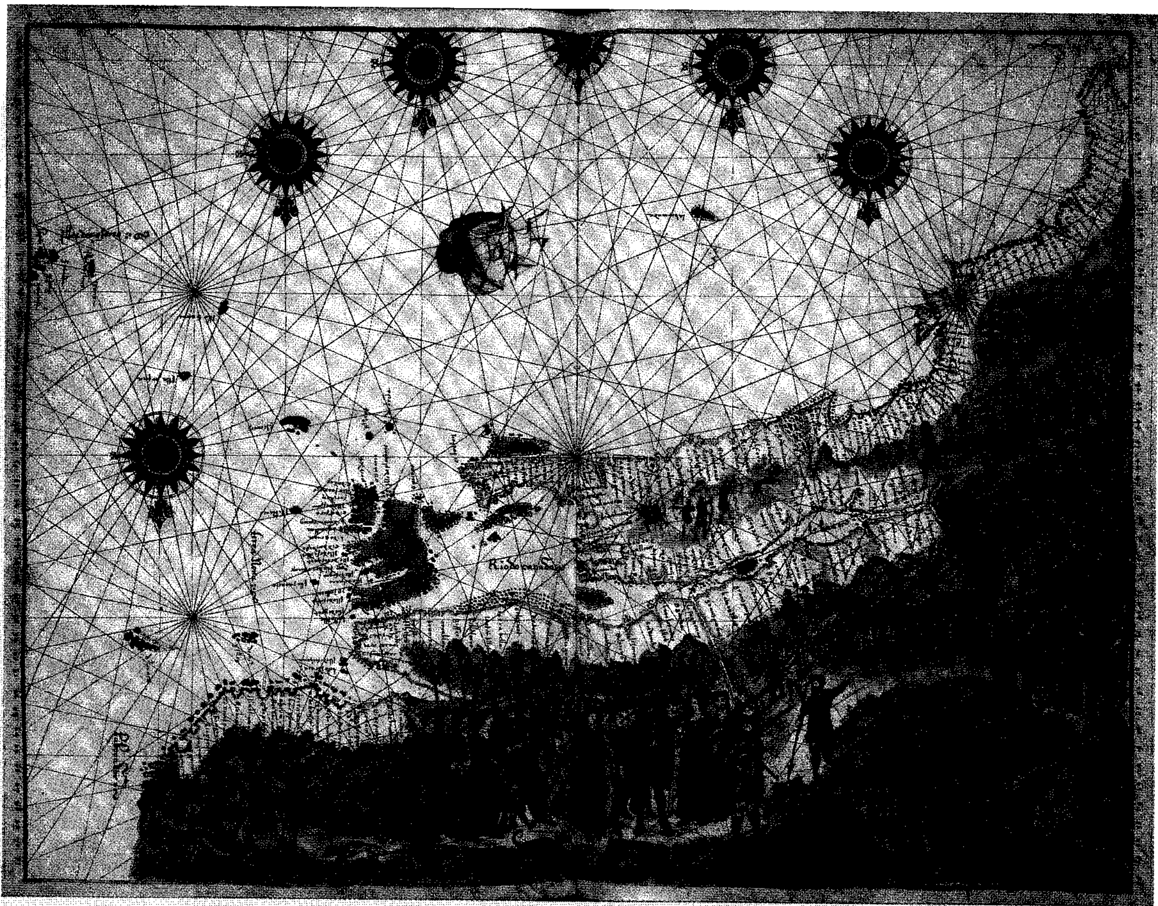
other than his officers. However, there was at least one gunner on the crew of his two ships, because they fired cannons. An account of his second voyage in 1535 mentions that "all the gentlemen" of the expedition were on board as well as soldiers. They were so well armed that Chief Donnacona worried when they landed about why "the captain and his people carried so many war sticks," when the Amerindians had none. These "war sticks" were probably pikes and halberds. The French, in fact, were on their guard. When they went to Hochelaga, it was only with "the captain, the gentlemen, and 25 well-armed soldiers."[17]

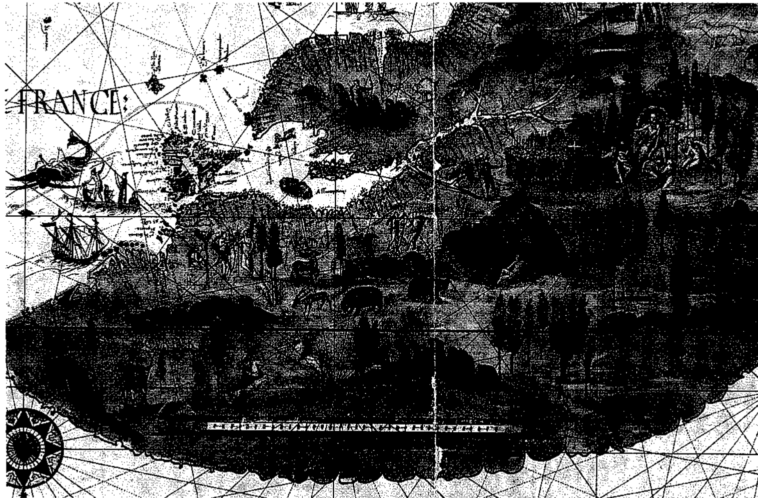
Map showing the voyages of Cartier and Roberval from 1534 to 1542, drawn around 1547 by Nicolas Vallard.

Collection of the Huntington Library, San Marino.

Furthermore, when they decided to pass the winter in Canada for the first time that same year, they feared "betrayal" on the part of the Amerindians and erected a small fort "entirely enclosed with large pieces of wood standing on end . . . and with artillery all around it." They also reinforced it with "large moats, wide and deep, and a draw-bridge gate."[18]

Military preparations, previously limited to the essentials, assumed an important place in Cartier's third voyage to





Roberval and his soldiers in New France in 1542, shown on a map drawn in 1546 by Pierre Descelliers.
National Archives of Canada (NMC40461).

Canada a few years later in the company of Sieur de Roberval. Their goal this time was not just exploration but colonization. A plan written by Cartier at the time mentioned that he needed "40 harquebusier men-at-arms."[19] However, a Spanish spy posted in St. Malo in April 1541 observed that the preparations seemed to be for a much larger expedition. He reported that Sieur de Roberval commanded 300 "men-at-arms," that Captain Jacques Cartier led 400 sailors and 20 master pilots, and that 160 gentlemen would be on board, not to mention all the artisans, workmen and other skilled people needed to establish the future colony – in all some "800 to 900 people."[20] The soldiers were armed, according to the spy, with harquebuses and crossbows, and also carried rondaches or small round shields. The ships allegedly carried 400 harquebuses, 200 crossbows, 200 rondaches and more than 1000 pikes and halberds. There were also several pieces of artillery. In short, there was enough to arm not only the soldiers and gentlemen, but also the sailors and future colonists.

Insofar as clothing was concerned, the same Spanish spy reported that for the expedition of 1541 Cartier "gave everyone a black and white livery."[21] Whether in the colours of the king, a province, a noble family, a religious group, or a gentleman, livery was of heraldic origin. It was a kind of uniform before they existed, identifying the servants and all the people belonging to a household. It was not uncommon at this time for the soldiers and sailors bound to a particular captain by ties that were still influenced by feudalism to wear livery as well. In 1462, Louis XI authorized the sailors from the Gironde (Bordeaux) to wear clothing of "red and white like our emblem."[22] In 1533, François I ordered his foot soldiers to wear the colours of their captains' livery on their sleeves. Since the Middle Ages, black and white had been the colours of Brittany, and it is thus not surprising that these colours were worn by the sailors of a captain from St. Malo, as well as by the accompanying men-at-arms. The livery of Cartier's soldiers and sailors was therefore, in all likelihood, the first "uniform" worn in Canada.

Weapons, liveries, contingents of troops – all this information indicates the extent of the preparations for this expedition and the importance attached to

the military aspect. How would the weapons be distributed? Probably the harquebuses and crossbows, as more expensive and specialized arms, would be given primarily to the soldiers. On a voyage like this, pikes and halberds were most useful to the sailors and the future colonists, in short, to all the men able to bear arms on the ship in case of attack by enemy galleons or even by pirates. These weapons could be used on land as well for defending forts, but were of little use against Amerindians. As for the rondaches, they were for the soldiers armed with swords, who formed the bulk of the infantry at the time. Since soldiers generally owned their own weapons and defensive equipment, in addition to those furnished by the expedition, the men accompanying Cartier on his third voyage were certainly armed to the teeth.

Harquebusier, between 1570 and 1580. Reconstitution by Eugène Titieux. Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence.

Drummer, between 1570 and 1580. Reconstitution by Eugène Titieux. Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence.

Difficult Relations

The ships finally set sail in May 1541, with Cartier leading the way. On the five ships, there was probably one company of soldiers. Upon arrival at what is now Quebec City (which he called Charlesbourg-Royal), Cartier built two forts, one at the foot of Cap Rouge and the other, certainly smaller, on top of it, because that location commanded the entire region. Work proceeded apace. While some of the party began to cultivate the land, others set off to explore. They soon discovered what they believed to be gold, silver and diamonds – a French Eldorado! Unfortunately, relations with the Iroquois deteriorated. Though they were cordial when they first met, their exchanges became openly hostile during the winter of 1541-42. The Amerindians even boasted to some Spanish fishermen of having killed some 35 Frenchmen. The situation grew perilous enough for Cartier to abandon Charlesbourg-Royal. He returned to France in June 1542 with what remained of his party . . . and with his treasures.

Roberval, in turn, departed for Canada in 1542 with three ships carrying 200 people, including a few gentlemen. However, upon arriving in Newfoundland at the site where the city of St. John's now stands, he met Cartier sailing away to France! Roberval pointed out that the French now had sufficient forces to confront the Amerindians and ordered Cartier to return, but in vain. The thirst for gold and glory won out over duty, and Cartier slipped away by night, headed for St. Malo. However, he was bitterly

disappointed upon his arrival: his treasure was nothing but worthless rock! Furthermore, the king of France would never again confer the command of an expedition upon him, no doubt because he had disobeyed Roberval.

Despite Cartier's departure, Roberval sailed on to Quebec. The fortifications erected the previous year seem to have been destroyed, because everything had to be rebuilt. Soon a fort that "was very strong, located on a mountain" and incorporating "a large tower" and a main building arose on the summit of Cap Rouge. Another fort was built at the foot, "of which part formed a two-storey tower, with two good main buildings."[23] The new settlement was baptized France-Roy. The Amerindians did not seem very hostile to the newcomers, but kept their distance. During the winter of 1542-43 scurvy struck, mowing down one-quarter of the French colonists. With his colony decimated and no gold found, Roberval gave up, and by the beginning of September 1543 the survivors were back in France.

A battle between Inuit and the sailors and soldiers of Martin Frobisher's expedition on Baffin Island in 1577. John White. Watercolour.

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Other Fruitless Expeditions

After the expeditions of Cartier and Roberval in 1541-43, the British and French made various other attempts throughout the rest of the sixteenth century to find the Northwest Passage or another Eldorado, but they all ended in failure.

The most important expeditions were those of the Englishman Martin Frobisher between 1576 and 1578. Like Cartier,

English sailor from the time of the Arctic explorations of Martin Frobisher and John Davis.
Taken from César Vecellio's work on costumes. Dover Books, New York.

Frobisher was searching, though much farther north, for gold and the famous passage to Asia. One hundred men, including 30 soldiers and 11 gentlemen, took part in his second expedition in 1577. During this voyage, the relations between the Inuit and the English quickly deteriorated. The latter attempted to take some natives hostage; a battle ensued, in which the European soldiers used their harquebuses and their bows. A few men, including Frobisher himself, were wounded by Inuit arrows. The place where this battle occurred, the first in the North, was named Bloody Point.

From a military point of view, the wounds suffered by the British in this battle indicate that they were not wearing any armour or protective clothing, or that their protection was insufficient. British soldiers at the time employed much the same weapons as the French, with the exception of the longbow which the British alone had. British soldiers also often wore livery, although the soldiers and sailors of the Frobisher

English gentleman of Martin Frobisher's time.
Taken from César Vecellio's work on costumes. Dover Books, New York.

expeditions may not have had any.

Believing that he had discovered gold on Kodlunarn Island, Frobisher returned the next year leading a fleet of 15 ships with some 400 men. At the time, it was the largest expedition ever mounted in the Arctic. There were probably around 200 sailors and 100 soldiers on board, since, out of the 100 men who were supposed to pass the winter on Baffin Island that year, 40 were sailors and 30 were soldiers. The rest of the men were regular officers, gentlemen, and of course

miners, for during the summer months more than 1,300 tonnes of "gold" were dug up. Having accumulated such a treasure, Frobisher, like Cartier before him, decided to return immediately rather than passing the winter there. When analyzed upon the fleet's return to England, however, his treasure turned out to be nothing more than gneiss.

Other expeditions followed Frobisher's, although they were much more modest in scale and apparently unarmed, like those undertaken between 1585 and 1587 by John Davis, the discoverer of the strait that today bears his name. Davis and his sailors also encountered the Inuit and were unable to penetrate any farther than Frobisher. A few years earlier, in 1583, Sir John Gilbert had barely had time to take official possession of Newfoundland once again, in the name of the British sovereign, before disappearing in a storm.

The Gold of the Northern Seas

Recent discoveries have confirmed that the Labrador coast also had its hour of glory during the second half of the sixteenth century, when it was frequented year after year by whalers from the Spanish Basque country. These intrepid sailors alone possessed the techniques and audacity needed to hunt the giant cetaceans. The whale oil that they obtained, used primarily for lighting, was worth a considerable amount of money. Every spring, about 2,000 Spanish Basque sailors arrived on board some 20 galleons and settled down for the season on the Labrador coast, notably at a place named "Butus" facing the Strait of Belle Isle, which was then part of the "Provincia de Terranova." Today it is known as Red Bay. In view of the fact that the entire Spanish fleet in the West Indies bringing back the gold and silver of the conquered peoples

Harquebusier, between 1580 and 1590. Reconstitution by Eugène Titieux. Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence.

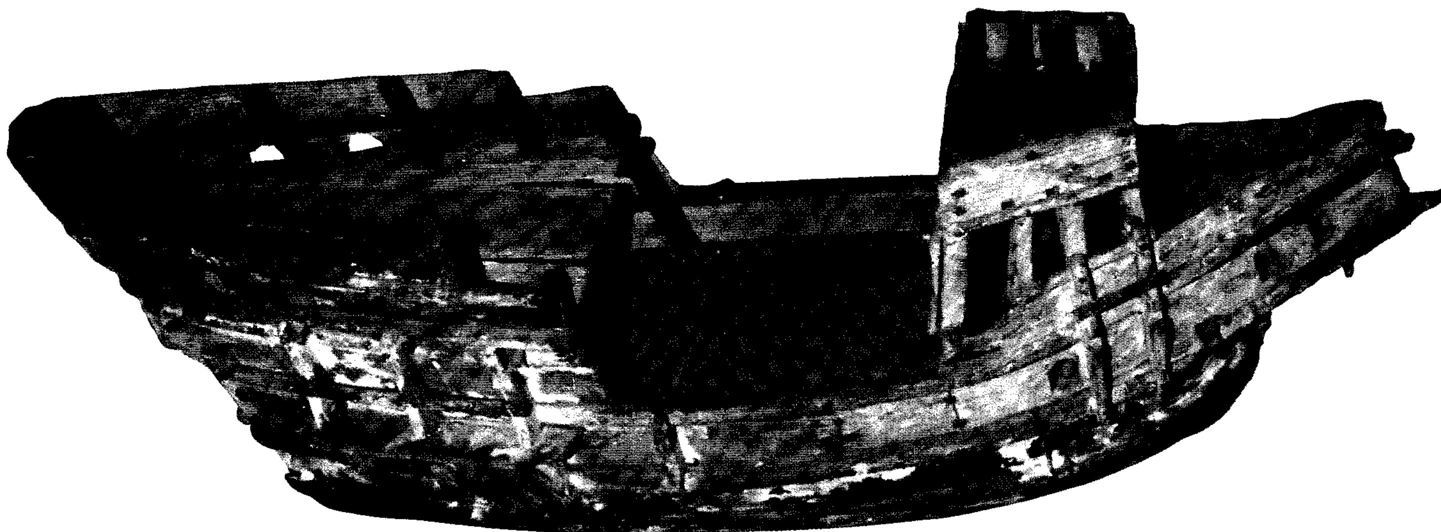
Spanish officer between 1570 and 1580. Anonymous water-colour. Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence.

numbered only 70 to 80 ships, the presence off Labrador of some 20 galleons may seem surprising. However, it provides a good indication of the importance of "Terranova." To some extent at least, whale oil was the gold of the northern seas.

The Basque settlements in Labrador were not intended to be permanent. They were temporary, designed just to last for the season. Sometimes, however, the whalers were forced to spend the winter. Galleons were sometimes wrecked there, as was the case of the *San Juan*, which sank in 1565 and was discovered again during the 1970s in the waters of Red Bay. Detailed underwater archeological studies were carried out as this type of ship has played an important role in world history.

Conflicts sometimes erupted between fishing vessels manned by southern Basques, from the Spanish Basque lands, and those manned by northern Basques, who were French. In 1554, the latter seized four ships from their Spanish cousins, off the coast of Newfoundland. The response was not long in coming. The same year, the *Sancti Spiritu* was transformed from a whaler into a privateer, lying in wait to ambush ships flying the French flag. A Spanish attack destroyed part of the French fishing fleet off Newfoundland. France and Spain were at war at the time and other skirmishes ensued. On April 21, 1557, King Philip II of Spain ordered that all vessels bound for Newfoundland, whether whalers, cod-fishing ships or others, be armed with at least four cannons and eight swivel guns. Some already were, such as the 130-ton *Madalena*, which had carried six cannons and eight swivel guns since 1550, and the 250-ton *San Nicolas*, which

Reconstruction of a sixteenth-century Spanish galleon, illustrating several features of the Basque ships off Labrador.
Museo Naval, Madrid.



was equipped that same year with six cannons and 12 swivel guns. The *Santa Ana,* a huge 650-ton ship, carried ten cannons and 20 swivel guns, while the *San Juan,* a vessel of about 300 tons which sank in 1565, was armed with eight cannons and ten swivel guns. In general, the galleons of the Spanish Basques were quite large, weighing between 200 and 650 tons and carrying crews of 50 to 120 men.

Documents of the time do not indicate the presence of soldiers, either on the ships or on land. However, officers and sailors could take up arms if needed, providing a kind of marine infantry. Every galleon carried iron artillery pieces, which supposes the presence of naval gunners. In order to train these men and ensure that the cannons were well maintained, the command of each ship included a gunnery officer.

Nevertheless, a document from 1571 related to a loan agreement for the construction of the 500-ton *San Cristobal* mentions that the outfitters should place on board[24] this galleon 24 harquebuses, an equal number of crossbows and shields, 26 helmets, 20 breastplates and backs, and 144 small and large pikes, all to equip the 100 men on board. In the case of battle, the crew would be divided as follows: about half would use the harquebuses and

Clothing of a Spanish Basque sailor in the second half of the sixteenth century, found during archeological excavations in Red Bay.
Published with the permission of the Canadian Conservation Institute, Memorial University, Newfoundland.

Mid-sixteenth-century ship, engraved on a plank of the galleon San Juan, *which sank in Red Bay, Labrador, in 1565.*
Canadian Parks Service.

crossbows, a quarter to a fifth would carry pikes and armour, and the rest would serve in the artillery or execute manoeuvres. To these armaments were added the personal weapons of the crew members and the officers: swords, daggers, and axes. This was not just an idle precaution. The *San Cristobal*, like all vessels of the period, ran a high risk of attack at sea. Furthermore, when the men landed they faced Inuit who were hostile because some Basques had carried off the wife of an Inuit chief around 1550. This ill-considered gesture would make the coast of Labrador, already rather forbidding with its bare rock and scraggy conifers, even more inhospitable for generations of Basque sailors.

The defeat by the English of the invincible Armada, the pride of the Spanish navy, apparently played a major part in the decline of the Newfoundland fishery because the Basques lost many of the ships and sailors mobilized by Philip II. The heavy losses suffered by the Spanish fleet resulted in a sharp increase in the dangers attending sea voyages and in the numbers of pirates, who were mainly English, around the turn of the seventeenth century. The most celebrated of the pirates was certainly Peter Easton, whose base was in Newfoundland. Captured by the Spanish Basque fleet, the base was retaken by Easton and his men after an epic battle. At about the same time, the Spanish Basques' virtual monopoly on whaling was broken by the Dutch and English. With whaling no longer so profitable for the Basques, the "Provincia de Terranova" was forgotten.

The European Failure

France undertook a final attempt at colonization just before the end of the century, this time on Sable Island off Nova Scotia, in 1598. Named viceroy of New France, the Marquis

de la Roche-Mesgouez did not venture to land in person on this windswept sandbank barely rising above the tides. Instead he sent 40 colonists recruited from prisons, escorted by about ten soldiers, to establish the settlement. By 1603, only 11 survivors remained to be rescued, the rest having perished in a mutiny. Elsewhere, after a disastrous winter, the *Habitation* erected at Tadoussac in 1600 by Pierre Chauvin de Tonnetuit was also abandoned.

In Mexico and Peru, where the conquistadors confronted Amerindian civilizations much more advanced than those to the north, the white soldiers nevertheless carried the day because battles were waged on open ground. In Canada, however, the Amerindians' tactic was to be elusive and take advantage of the cover, insurmountable for the time being, provided by the nature of the land and rigours of the climate. Successive waves of European invaders found themselves reduced one after the other to a defensive struggle. How could a military assault be launched on the interior of an unknown country, when the newcomers already feared for their lives inside coastal forts or on ships which they dared not leave? This chronic insecurity accounts for much of the failure to establish European settlements in Canada in the sixteenth century. Even the semi-permanent activities of the Spanish Basques were drawing to a close. Since the age of the Vikings, Europeans and natives had often met and clashed, but despite their great technological superiority, the white men had failed to put down any lasting roots in the New World. When Cartier abandoned Charlesbourg-Royal in 1542, he commented that he could not resist "with his little band the Savages who prowled around daily and greatly disturbed him."[25] This was a clear admission of the effectiveness of the Amerindians' guerilla tactics. In the Arctic, the Inuit also held the white men in check. The English chroniclers never ceased complaining about the valour the "savages" displayed in combat and their skill in handling their arms.

Officer, between 1580 and 1590. Reconstitution by Eugène Titieux.
Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence.

Finally, a new phenomenon that had begun to emerge in the first half of the century established itself more firmly in the second half, as the various European nations, without abandoning their traditional battlefields, carried their enmities abroad to the four corners of the world.

A century had passed since John Cabot took possession of Newfoundland, but nothing remained of the French, British or Spanish Basque presence in North America. A page had turned.

Fleet of galleons from the Spanish Basque lands, anchored off Labrador around 1560. Richard Schlecht. Oil.
National Geographic Society, Washington.

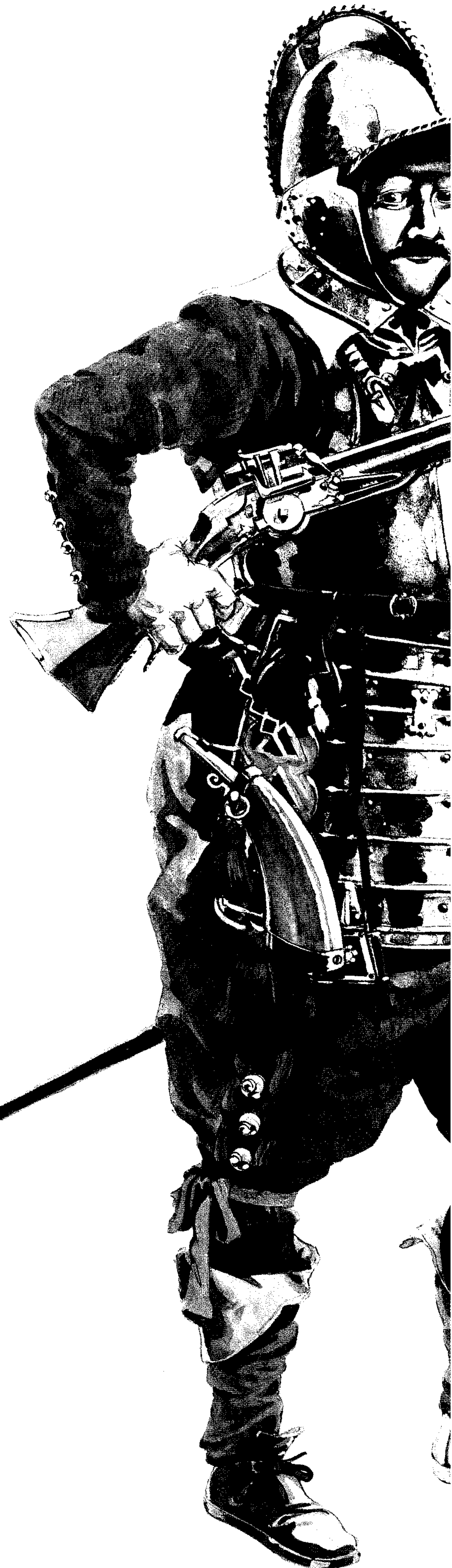
Chapter 3

THE FIRST SOLDIERS OF NEW FRANCE

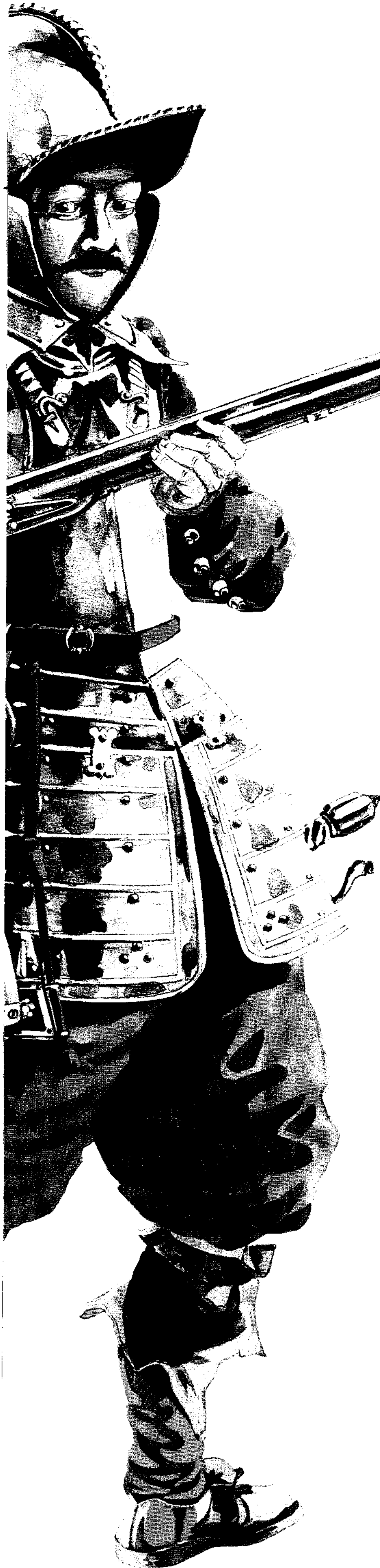
By the beginning of the seventeenth century, the nations of northwestern Europe had accepted the obvious: it was unrealistic to continue hoping that they, like Spain, would discover countries with mountains of gold and rivers of diamonds. Nevertheless, considerable profit could be made from the exploitation of more conventional natural resources. First among these was fur. Aware of the new interest in it, the Iroquois set out resolutely to control the fur trade, thereby coming into conflict with tribes allied with the French. At the same time, various conflicts arose among the European nations disputing territory in North America. It was in this difficult climate that small colonies began to emerge in New France in the seventeenth century.

Throughout these turbulent times, the search for more effective weapons and equipment led to numerous technical advances. All the maritime nations of Europe drew an ever greater distinction between warships and merchant ships. An English invention accelerated this process, namely wheeled carriages for naval cannons, which made it possible to reload easily and greatly increased the number of shots that could be fired in battle. The previous century's galleons armed for war were replaced by vessels specifically designed for combat. They were better able to resist cannon fire, carried many cannons on board, and could sail more rapidly. Vessels carrying more than 50 cannons were known as ships of the line. They were supported by frigates, which were smaller, faster ships with less artillery on board.

The revolution in naval technology was felt as well in the merchant marine. The cargo capacity of



French harquebusier in Canada, between 1610 and 1620. Reconstitution by Michel Pétard. Canadian Department of National Defence.



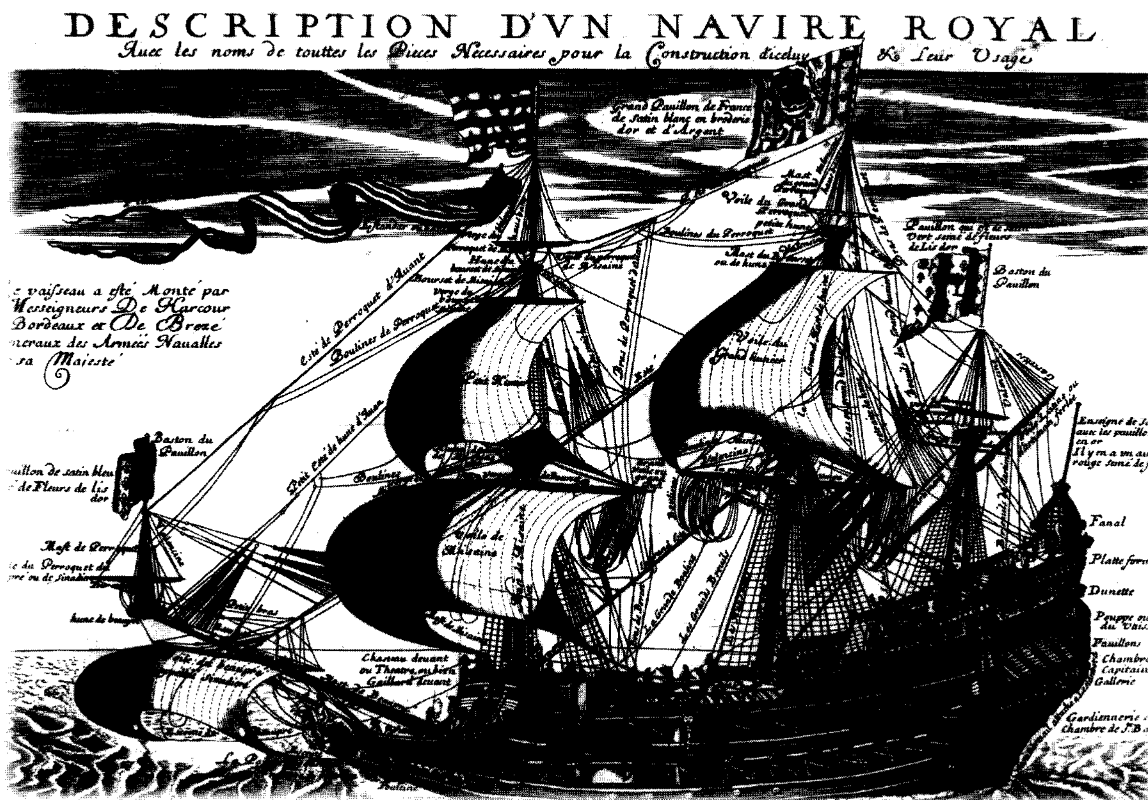
merchant ships was increased, making it easier for them to conduct very long voyages. Sailing to China was still an adventure, but no longer an exploit. The Dutch replaced the Portuguese as the leading trading power with the Orient, due to their energetic economic policies and a large merchant fleet.

On land, the art of warfare was also evolving quickly. The century between the beginning of the Wars of Religion around 1550 and the end of the Thirty Years' War in 1648 witnessed very rapid technical and tactical progress. In Cartier's time, battlefields were dominated by weapons for hand-to-hand combat, especially swords and spears. A century later, portable firearms dominated: harquebuses and muskets. Artillery also made considerable progress. The calibres were rationalized, and cannons grew lighter, so that fewer men and horses were required to move them. Mortars, which were very useful in sieges for shooting explosives over walls and fortifications, carved out a place for themselves in the array of artillery, although they were particularly dangerous to use.

From Harquebuses to Muskets

Muskets began replacing harquebuses in the final third of the sixteenth century. However, the change-over was slow. Harquebuses were relatively light weapons, although their effectiveness was limited by their small calibre. Muskets provided the greatest possible penetration, but their large calibre made them too heavy. Around 1590, muskets weighed about 7.5 kg and fired balls about 21.7 mm in diameter. In order to aim them, the barrel, where most of the weight lay, had to be supported by a kind of forked rod, which was a major inconvenience.

The Dutch succeeded in somewhat lightening these miniature cannons. Around 1600, their muskets supported by forks weighed 6 to 6.5 kg



French warship between 1630 and 1640.

National Archives of Canada (C109028).

and fired balls about 18.5 mm in diameter. Muskets continued to improve, benefiting from technical progress made in the production of barrels. The army of King Gustav Adolf I of Sweden, considered the most innovative in the first third of the seventeenth century, was the first to adopt new, lighter weapons. A chronicler of 1632 reported having seen a company of Swedish soldiers, and among them were "musketeers armed with the new, very light muskets without forks."[26] This progress was made possible mostly by modifications to the wooden butt and the barrel. However, the reduction in weight came at the cost of a reduced calibre, and the balls were henceforth only 16 mm in diameter. Finally, around 1650, improvements to musket design produced a weapon weighing only about 4.5 to 5 kg and no longer requiring forks.

Musketeers fought on battlefields in platoons, companies and battalions. Protected by pikemen against cavalry charges, they fired salvos at the rate of about two a minute. That may appear very little compared with archers who could fire numerous arrows in the same amount of time. However, a lifetime of training was needed to become a good archer, while musketeers could learn the basic skills of their trade in a week. As for accuracy of aim, this was not a terribly important concern on the

agility required to handle muskets also encouraged changes in musketeers' clothing.

French soldiers of the early seventeenth century. Alfred de Marbot. Engraving.
Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence.

battlefields of Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

With the exception of pikemen, whose numbers continued to diminish, the transition from harquebuses to muskets led to the gradual abandonment of helmets and cuirasses, which were heavy to carry and provided ever less protection against gunfire that was growing more and more murderous. The

The Soldiers of Trading Companies

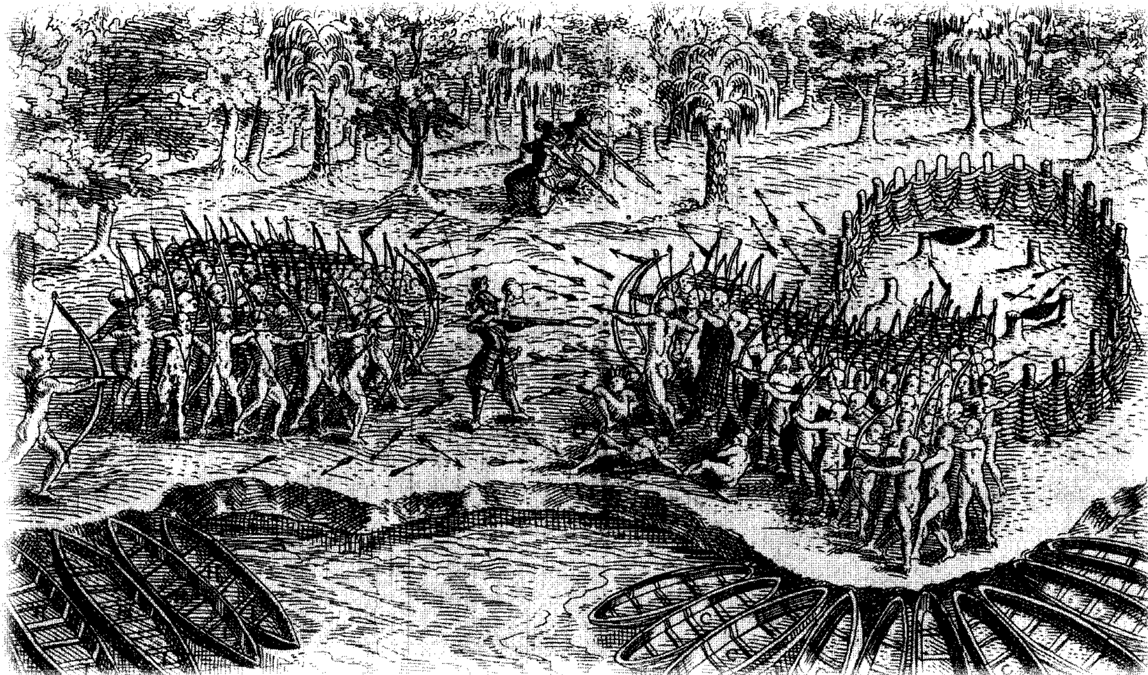
The few French soldiers who landed in Canada from 1604 on were usually veterans of the incessant conflicts raging across Europe. They were recruited and hired by trading companies that obtained monopolies in New France, or exclusive rights to exploit resources and trade them. In exchange for this privilege, the companies agreed to several obligations to the king, namely to colonize New France, Christianize the Amerindians, govern, and defend the interests of His Majesty. These activities required a certain amount of armed protection, which the companies also undertook to provide. Since the companies owed absolute loyalty and obeisance to the king, the men-at-arms whom they paid were, to some extent, just as much soldiers as their colleagues who were paid out of the royal treasury. Both types of soldiers were bound to fight the enemies of the realm, regardless of who or where they were.

Few soldiers were sent to Canada in the first decades of the French Regime for the simple reason that they were

expensive. Often on the verge of bankruptcy, trading companies hired as few soldiers as possible. Another possible explanation is that members of the expeditions were rarely clearly identified as soldiers in the records of the times. Military men, of course, did not only engage in soldiery; they had other occupations as well, which may obscure our view of them. The records often mention people described only as the "companion" to someone, Champlain for instance, taking action in battles. Flexibility of roles was necessary in a nascent colony, but did not prevent military duties from occupying an important place alongside the other occupations of soldiers and "companions."

At the time of the trading companies, rank and authority in New France were entirely military in nature. The colony's governor was also the supreme commander. In the absence of any councils to provide opposition, his authority

French officer, around 1635. Theodore Mass. Engraving.
Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence.



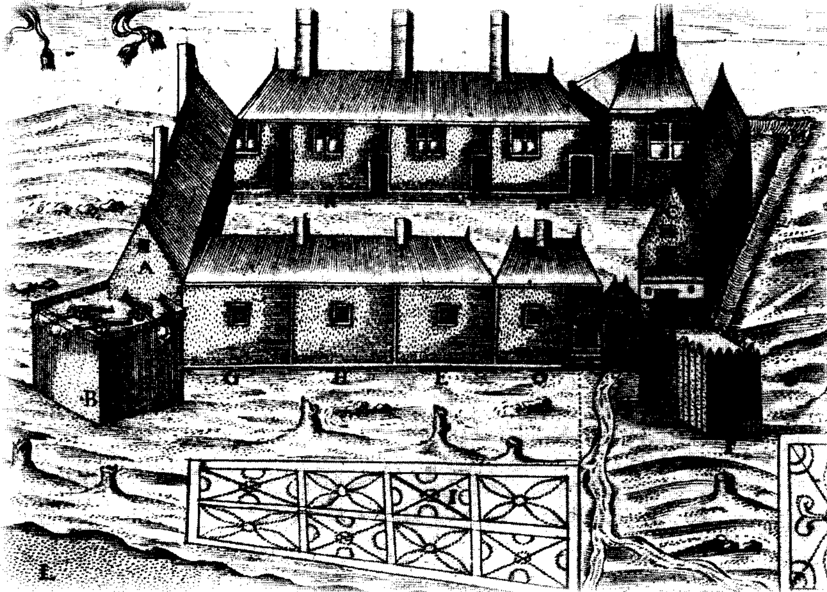
A battle with the Iroquois by Lake Champlain, near the present town of Ticonderoga, N.Y., on July 30, 1609. In the centre of the action, Samuel de Champlain, wearing a helmet and cuirass, shoots two of the enemy chiefs. The Iroquois, shown naked, actually wore armour during this engagement.
National Library of Canada (NL6643).

was absolute. This form of autocratic government remained essentially unchanged throughout the French Regime.

The First Permanent Colonies

Sieur de Monts, the lieutenant-general and vice-admiral of the colony, obtained the monopoly on the natural resources of New France for several years. He was responsible for establishing the first permanent French settlements, in both Acadia, where he constructed the forts of Saint-Croix and Port-Royal, and in the St. Lawrence Valley, where he had the first fort built in Quebec. The Acadian colonies developed good relations with the Amerindian tribes occupying this territory, namely the Micmacs and Abenakis, although these settlements became embroiled in disputes among the European nations that wanted to appropriate this land for themselves. The colonies in the St. Lawrence Valley, however, were perpetually drawn into conflict with Amerindians.

The history of the Acadian settlements is full of turbulence, periods of abandonment, capture and recapture. In 1604, Sieur de Monts, whose monopoly covered only Acadia at the time, sent a first expedition to Saint-Croix and had a fort built there. When an outbreak of scurvy killed 35 of the 80 residents, the survivors moved to Port-Royal, where they constructed a new Habitation. In 1613, Englishmen from Virginia razed all the French positions in Acadia. Port-Royal arose again from the ashes in 1620, and a new Habitation was built farther north, at Miscou, near the entrance to



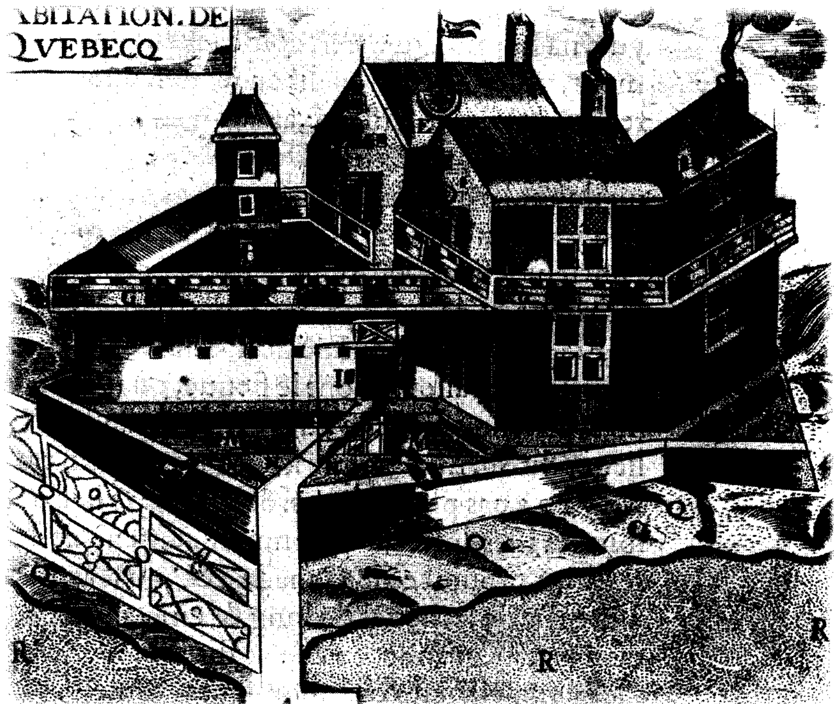
"Abitasion" (sic) or Habitation of Port-Royal, constructed in 1605.
National Library of Canada (NL8760).

English musketeer, around 1630. This is how the English soldiers who occupied Port-Royal and Quebec between 1629 and 1632 probably looked. Richard Caton-Woodville. Water-colour.
Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence.

Chaleur Bay. However, the British colonies developed rapidly after 1621, and by 1629 the British flag was once again flying over the fort at Port-Royal. The treaty of 1632 returned Acadia to France, but only for a short time because the British were still claiming this land.

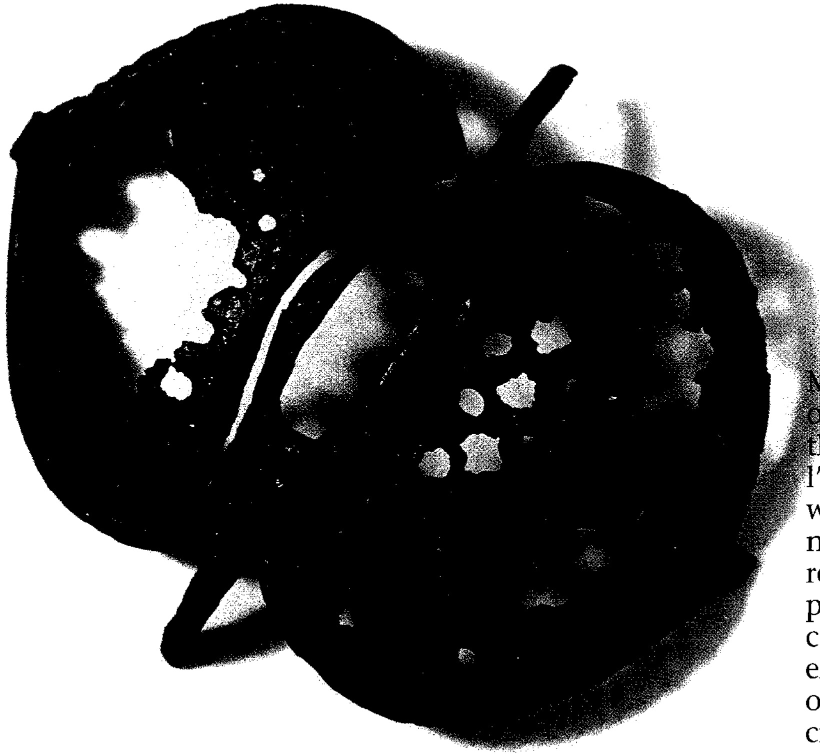
Shortly after his first ventures in Acadia, Sieur de Monts extended his monopoly to the St. Lawrence Valley and dispatched another expedition, led by Champlain, to the site of Quebec City. On July 3, 1608, Champlain began the construction of the Habitation in what would become the lower town of Quebec, in order to provide protection for the fledgling colony. These, then, were the timid beginnings of the first permanent settlement in New France. A new fort was built at Quebec in 1620 to replace the decaying Habitation of 1608, and in 1624 "a square wall with two little towers on the corners" was added "for the security of the place."[27] Two years later, Fort Saint-Louis was constructed on the heights of Cap Diamant. Eventually it became the residence of the governor general under the name Château Saint-Louis. Champlain's alliance with the Hurons and Algonquins provoked the hostility of the Iroquois, who wanted this relationship to fail. From 1609 until the peace of 1622, Champlain and some his men set off on several campaigns against them.

In 1627, the monopoly for New France was turned over to the Company of the Hundred Associates. It sent out so few soldiers that when the vessels of the Kirke brothers, privateers chartered by the King of England, Charles I, cast anchor at Quebec in 1629, only a handful of soldiers were available to meet them. Thus France lost its colony, which was returned in 1632 by the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, as was Acadia. The next year, Champlain returned to Quebec with three ships and repossessed Fort Saint-Louis. In 1634, one of the gentlemen on the voyage, Sieur de la Violette, left to establish Trois-Rivières and build a fort there.



"Abitation de Quebecq" (sic). The walls have loopholes, and the fortifications are provided with artillery and surrounded by a moat and drawbridge.

National Library of Canada (NL8759).



Fragment of a sword guard found during excavations at the site of the Jesuit mission of Sainte-Marie among the Hurons (1639-49), one of the oldest relics of edged weapons in New France.
Sainte-Marie among the Hurons, Huronia Historic Park, Ontario.

The colony's garrison was doubtless still very small when the new governor, Charles Huault de Montmagny, arrived in Quebec in 1636, probably with some reinforcements. He was a naval officer, a Knight of the Order of Malta, and a veteran of battles against Turkish and Arab corsairs. A quick tour of the little colony convinced him that its military defence needed urgent reorganization. He instructed the engineer Jean Bourdon to make improvements to Fort Saint-Louis at Quebec, where he would reside as governor, by replacing the wooden palisade with walls of stone and masonry and by building a guardhouse. A redoubt was built in the lower town, adding "cannons to cover the river and reinforcing the platform on which they stood." At the Trois-Rivières fort as well, a "platform and cannons" were added. The colony was therefore now animated by a much more martial spirit than under Champlain, as this quotation shows.

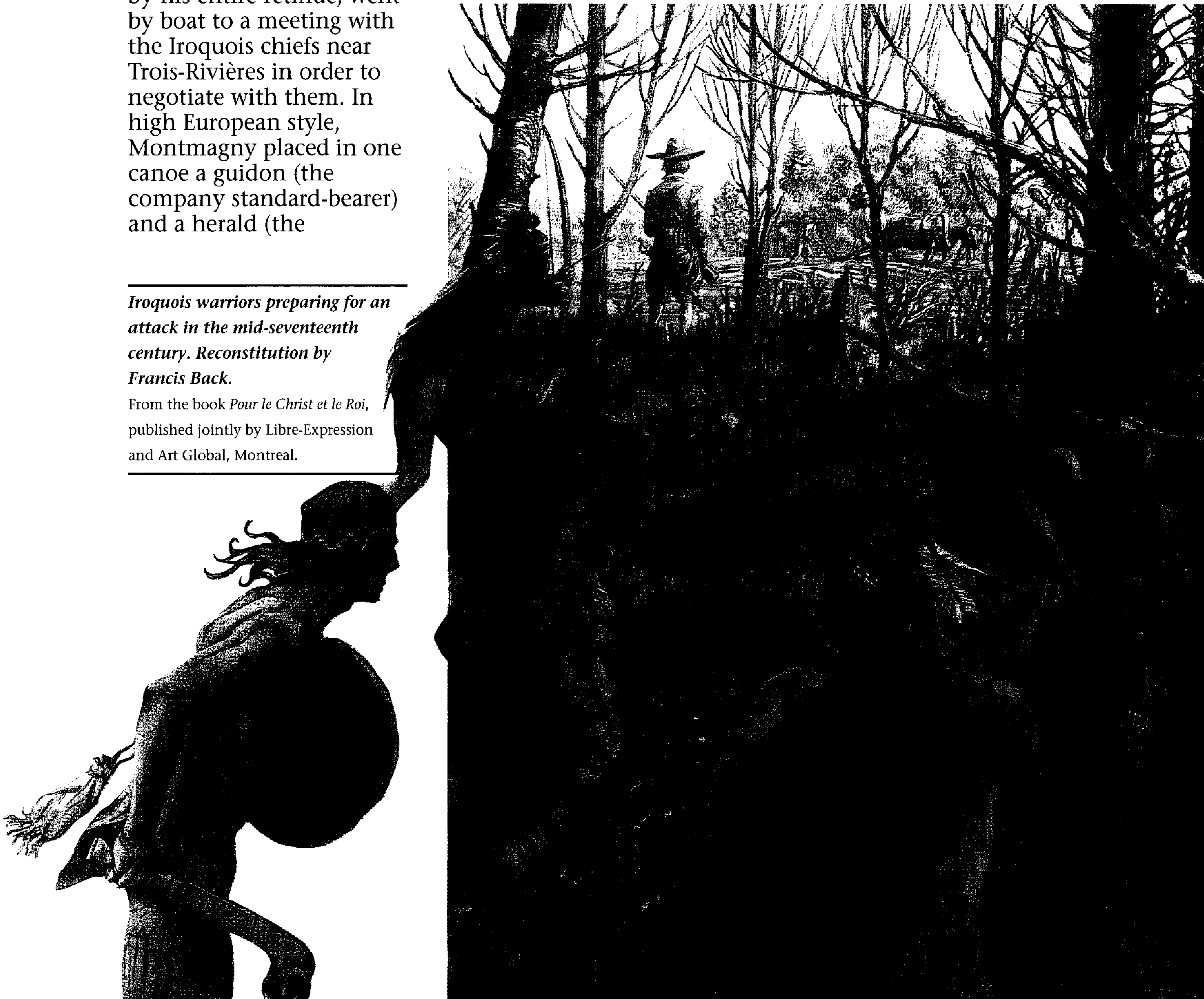
"We have here two brave Knights, one as Governor, that being Monsieur de Montmagny, and the other as his Lieutenant, that being Monsieur de l'Isle. We also have very worthy Gentlemen, and a number of experienced, resolute soldiers. It is a pleasure to see them conducting their war exercises in the sweetness of peacetime, to hear the crack of the muskets and cannons only as festive noises . . . The Diane [the first drum call of the day] awakens us every morning, and we see the sentries posted. The guardhouse is always well-stocked. Each squad has its days to stand sentry. In a word, our fortress of Kébec is guarded in peacetime like an important position in wartime."[28]

Few Soldiers to Fight the Iroquois

The peace of 1622, inherited from Champlain, gradually dissolved during the course of the 1630s, when the Iroquois obtained firearms in exchange for beaver pelts from the Dutch at Fort Orange (today Albany, New York).

The French refused to trade arms, or at least confined the practice strictly to some Hurons converted to Christianity. Eager to avenge the defeats they had previously suffered at the hands of the French, and now equipped to do so, the Iroquois grew increasingly hostile. The smouldering conflict finally erupted in 1641, when Governor Montmagny, accompanied by his entire retinue, went by boat to a meeting with the Iroquois chiefs near Trois-Rivières in order to negotiate with them. In high European style, Montmagny placed in one canoe a guidon (the company standard-bearer) and a herald (the diplomatic courier). The "canoe, guidon and herald" were received with scorn by the Iroquois, who hooted at the emissaries, waved the scalp of an Algonquin allied with the French, and shot arrows at the French boats. Outraged by "all this insolence,"[29] Montmagny responded with swivel gun and musket fire. It was the beginning of a quarter century of hostilities.

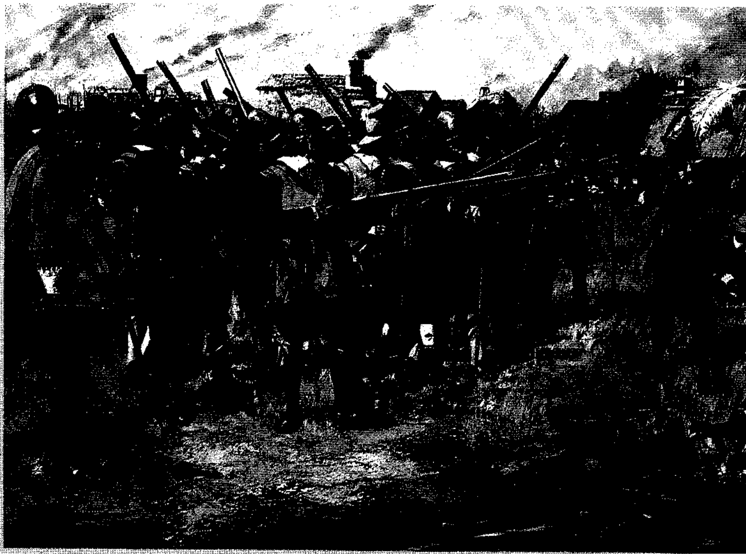
These were the prevailing conditions when, in May 1642, a group of colonists under the leadership of a former officer, Paul Chomedey de Maisonneuve, went to Montreal Island to establish a settlement. Considerable audacity was needed for such an undertaking, for this location, near Iroquois territory, was particularly exposed to attack. The new settlers constructed a fort, and the next year, equipped it with artillery. If the inhabitants of Quebec lived in relative



Iroquois warriors preparing for an attack in the mid-seventeenth century. Reconstitution by Francis Back.
From the book *Pour le Christ et le Roi*, published jointly by Libre-Expression and Art Global, Montreal.

security, the same was not true of the settlements of Trois-Rivières and Montreal, which their inhabitants never left "without their muskets, swords and pistols."[30] The danger was such in Ville-Marie (which would one day become Montreal) that all inhabitants were expected to provide for their own defence. It is not surprising therefore that they asked the king for colonists who were "all people with a stomach for war," knowing how to handle "a trowel with one hand and a sword with the other."[31]

In December, 1636, the colony of Massachusetts decreed that militia regiments should be formed. This was done the following year. Unike the militiamen in New France, those in New England imitated European organization and tactics as closely as possible. Reconstitution by Don Troiani. United States National Guard, Washington.



The defensive organisation of the colony proceeded. In August 1642, Governor Montmagny, having received a contingent of about 40 soldiers from France, ordered the construction of a fort at the mouth of the Richelieu River, where the city of Sorel now lies, in order to block the traditional invasion route of the Iroquois. In addition, the Queen of France, Anne of Austria, was particularly interested in Canadian affairs (though primarily from the point of view of protecting the missions), and she provided 100,000 livres to raise and equip a company of 60 soldiers. This was done in the winter of 1643-44, and the company "distributed among the various parts of the country," according to a chronicle of the time.[32]

These soldiers arrived in Quebec in June 1644. Twenty-two of them were then sent 1,300 km away "to the Hurons," that is, to the Sainte-Marie mission on the shores of Lake Huron, where they arrived on September 7. Here they lived with the Jesuits and shared their table. In September 1645, they returned to Ville-Marie, escorting a convoy of some 60 canoes "loaded with beaver."[33] This expedition was remarkable from several points of view. It was the first time that a French, or any European, garrison had been dispatched to defend positions this far west. Second, what the soldiers were guarding was not a solidly constructed fort, equipped with cannons, but a mission protected by a simple palisade in Amerindian style. Finally, the economic impact of

Small cannon found on Christian Island, Ontario, in 1913, doubtless the one which French soldiers brought to the Sainte-Marie mission in 1648 and buried the following year shortly before evacuating Huronia. Apparently, the breech of an old brass cannon had been recovered and a length encircled with iron added in order to make a small cannon about a metre long. Dated 1630 and marked with the initials "LCG," which are probably those of the skillful blacksmith who made it.

Sainte-Marie among the Hurons, Huronia Historic Park, Ontario.

the fur convoy, which reached its destination thanks to the vigilance of this escort, was considerable.

However, the "Queen's soldiers" were insufficient in number to ensure the safety of the French and their Amerindian allies. This detachment seems to have been incorporated with the regular garrison after 1645, because it was not mentioned again. At this time, there were perhaps about 60 French soldiers, distributed between the settlements of Montreal, Trois-Rivières and Quebec.

In 1642, well supplied with muskets and correspondingly more bellicose, the Iroquois attacked Fort Richelieu, which had just been built astride their route. Their skill in handling their new weapons surprised the French. In addition, despite the exposure of the site, soldiers were in such short supply that the garrison of this strategically vital fort had to be reduced to about ten men. The guerilla warfare was constant. Any soldier who ventured outside the fortifications, if only to hunt, was headed toward almost certain death.

Finally abandoned toward the end of 1646, Fort Richelieu was burned by the Iroquois in February 1647.

The Destruction of Huronia

The native peoples had been ravaged for some time by disastrous epidemics sparing no tribe that came into contact with Europeans. Both the Iroquois and the Hurons were heavily afflicted. Apart from this scourge, however, the Iroquois had gained certain advantages over the Hurons. While most of the Iroquois rejected the missionaries, the Hurons ended up divided between those who became Christians under the influence of the Jesuits and those who remained loyal to their traditional beliefs. Furthermore, the Iroquois were very close to the Dutch in Fort Orange, with whom they traded, while the Hurons had to travel hundreds of kilometres to exchange

Ensign marching on guard (sic), around 1650.
David M. Stewart Museum, Montreal.

their furs for French goods. Finally and most importantly from a military point of view, the Iroquois obtained firearms from the Dutch from approximately the year 1640, while the Hurons did not have any. Bolstered by all these advantages, the Iroquois felt that the time had come to implement their grand plan for the destruction of the Hurons, the allies of the French.

Perhaps because there was a scent of menace in the air, a detachment of eight soldiers from the Trois-Rivières garrison and four from the Montreal garrison escorted a large convoy of canoes headed for Huron country. These twelve soldiers carried with them a small piece of artillery for the defence of the Sainte-Marie mission.

The attack took place in the spring of 1649. More than 1,000 Iroquois warriors, armed to the teeth and outfitted with firearms, descended on Huronia. The final assault was under way after years of harassment. Several Huron villages, including the missions of Saint-Louis and Saint-Ignace, fell to the invaders. The losses were enormous. Only three of the 400 inhabitants of Teanaostaiae escaped with their lives, while the Iroquois lost only ten warriors. Other Hurons abandoned their villages, with no hope of returning, and scattered. Finally, the largest mission, that of Sainte-Marie, was abandoned, portending the end of Huronia. Its inhabitants, both French and Huron, took refuge on Christian Island, known as Gahoendoe in Amerindian. Here, in May 1649, with the help of able-bodied men, the few soldiers from the garrison transported the cannon that had arrived the previous year. They all applied themselves to constructing a little bastioned fort which they named Sainte-Marie II. However, famine struck the little colony of refugees during the winter of 1649-50, carrying off hundreds of Hurons. Finally, on June 10, 1650, after having buried not only their dead but also the cannon on the island, the approximately 300 surviving Hurons and the few remaining Frenchmen set out for Quebec, where they arrived on July 28. This was the end of Huronia, but not of the Hurons, for on October 15 of the same year, "the Hurons departed for war,"[34] according to a note of the Jesuit superior in Quebec.

Guerilla Warfare in the Heart of the French Colony

The fall of Huronia enabled the Iroquois to concentrate their subsequent war efforts on the French settlements in the St. Lawrence Valley. The French abandoned all their missions and positions west of Montreal, while to the south Fort Richelieu lay in ashes. As a result, all the

major routes to Montreal – the Ottawa River, the Richelieu River and the upper St. Lawrence – were more or less under Iroquois control. The intensity of Iroquois incursions into French-held territory increased, and a virtually permanent guerilla war ensued. Unlike the colonists in New England and New Holland, the inhabitants of New France now had to endure war in the very heart of their settlements.

To meet the threat, there were only tiny garrisons and a "flying camp" of regular soldiers and volunteers. In 1651, it was decided to strengthen it by raising its numbers to 70. However, the next year it was disbanded for reasons of economy. It was revived in 1653 to assist the Trois-Rivières garrison, which was struggling to fend off Iroquois attacks, before being permanently disbanded. After 1652, the permanent garrison should have consisted of 15 soldiers in Quebec, 10 in Trois-Rivières and 10 in Montreal, with "another 14 soldiers in Trois-Rivières";[35] in actual fact, however, the garrison consisted of only 35 soldiers. Nevertheless, the French and Iroquois concluded a peace treaty in the fall of 1653, even though it was of short duration.

The establishment of the French mission of Sainte-Marie de Gannentaha in the heart of Iroquois country in July 1656 seems surprising at first. However, it was in response to the wishes expressed three years earlier by the Iroquois of the Onondaga nation. A party of soldiers led by Zacharie Dupuy accompanied the five Jesuit missionaries who founded this mission on the shores of Lake Gannentaha (now known as Lake Onondaga, southeast of Syracuse, New York). There were apparently about 20 soldiers in the party, recruited in France by Dupuy himself.[36] The establishment of the Sainte-Marie mission did not please all the Amerindians however. The Mohawks were particularly opposed to this gesture of openness toward the French and mounted a few raids in the hope of breaking the peace. The number of ambushes increased considerably over a wide area in the fall of 1657. The situation of the French in the mission became untenable. They knew that, sooner or later, the Onondagas would once again rally to the other nations of the Iroquois Confederacy. To remain where they were was to accept a sentence of torture and death. Therefore, they secretly abandoned the camp under cover of darkness on March 20, 1658.

Corporal carrying his musket, around 1650.

David M. Stewart Museum, Montreal.

Another Round of Iroquois Wars

Thereafter, war with the Iroquois broke out even more intensely, with the Amerindians holding the strategic advantage. They

had defeated their enemies to the west, the Eries, and henceforth had nothing to fear. The Hurons had been practically annihilated, and the other Amerindian allies of the French were not nearly strong enough. The Iroquois also held the numerical advantage, because they could not fail to realize that the French garrison numbered barely 50 men. Well provided with arms by the Dutch, the Iroquois went from victory to victory for nearly a decade.

Concern, if not panic, emanates from pages penned by French writers of the time. The Iroquois were everywhere. They struck and disappeared immediately, audacious and always elusive. The fate of their victims was enough to make the hardiest of French souls tremble with fear. A quick death was a blessing, compared with the slow agony of those who were scalped, or worse still, roasted over low fires in an orgy of torture. The fear pervading the French colony spelled Iroquois victory in what today would be called "psychological warfare."

The battle of Long-Sault, in May 1660. Bombled. Engraving.
From *La Nouvelle-France*, Hachette, 1904.

The French responded to these raids as best as they could. In 1658, Governor Voyer d'Argenson set off in pursuit of the Iroquois with a party of 100 men. He intended to confront the Iroquois in a pitched battle, which he had every expectation of winning. Numerous colonists came to assist and swell the ranks of the few soldiers at his disposal. But the Iroquois seemed to evaporate into thin air. A further reason for concern was that no reinforcements arrived from France, despite all the appeals for assistance. Despairing of his cause, the governor fell back on defensive measures, encouraging the inhabitants, who were often living in isolation, to gather together in closed, fortified villages. This led to the creation of the villages of Saint-Pierre, on Île d'Orléans near Quebec, and Sainte-Marie at Cap-de-la-Madeleine, not far

from Trois-Rivières. Even the windmills were fortified. The colonists were gradually succumbing to a siege mentality.

The Battle of Long-Sault

It was in this atmosphere that occurred the adventure of Adam Dollard des Ormeaux and his 16 companions, consecrated the "saviours of New France" by one wave of Canadian historiographers, who practically canonized them, before being deprecated by a second wave as little more than profiteers searching for booty in the form of a load of furs! Fortunately, this debate has now calmed down. The military aims of the expedition undertaken by Sieur des Ormeaux, the young commander of the Montreal garrison, did not by any means exclude the possibility of making a profit if he and his companions succeeded in appropriating some furs. At this time, it was considered normal and totally legitimate for victors to seize booty, and nobody, from kings to simple men-at-arms, was deprived of this opportunity. Wages were not always paid regularly, as in today's armies, and booty was seen as a kind of bonus, regulated by the custom requiring that the shares be proportionate to one's military rank.

In the spring of 1660, Dollard and his men left Montreal, heading northwest up the Ottawa River. They apparently wanted to protect a convoy of furs from the Ottawa Valley, which was arriving from the northwest. When the party arrived at an abandoned fort at Long-Sault that had been built by the Algonquins the previous autumn, they were joined by a war party of 40 Hurons and four Algonquins. Totally unexpectedly, another war party then appeared, this time not allied but enemy and much stronger. It consisted of about 200 Iroquois warriors, who were as surprised to stumble across the French as the French were to run into them. Normally at that season the Iroquois

Captain going on guard, around 1650.

David M. Stewart Museum, Montreal.

were scattered, as they hunted along the Ottawa River, and Dollard surely intended to entrap small groups of them. Exceptionally, however, they had come together in May of that year to join another party of about 400 warriors on the islands lying in the mouth of the Richelieu River, today called the Sorel Islands.

The Iroquois (Onondagas) attacked immediately, but were repulsed. Some of them canoed to the Richelieu to seek reinforcements from the Mohawks and Oneidas. They soon arrived, together with some "Iroquoized" Hurons, who succeeded in persuading about 30 of their brethren in Dollard's camp to join them instead. Then the Iroquois, with the Huron defectors, approached the little fort. The remaining defenders fired a salvo, killing a few attackers. An all-out assault followed, but it too was repulsed. Seeing this, the Iroquois reverted to the methods they used to lay seige to Amerindian villages and attempted to knock down the palisade. In order to push them back the French threw, as makeshift grenades, two pistol barrels filled with

Soldier in the service of the Company of the Hundred Associates in Canada around 1650. Reconstitution by Michel Pétard. Canadian Department of National Defence.

powder and then an entire powder keg. The result was catastrophic. The keg hit something, fell back inside the fort and exploded, mowing down much of the small garrison. The Iroquois had only to enter the fort. Inside, only five Frenchmen and four Hurons were still alive.

After this battle, the Iroquois decided to return home. This prompted writers of the time to interpret the battle of Long-Sault as a great French victory, due allegedly to the heroism of the defenders, who obviously must have inflicted terrible losses on the enemy. This was evidently not the case: the fort was taken, and the entire garrison lost, clearly amounting to a French defeat. Insofar as Iroquois losses were concerned, a Dutch report stated that the Iroquois had mentioned that 14 warriors had been killed and 19 others wounded in attacking a "fort defended by 17 Frenchmen and 100 savages."[37] Hardly a great slaughter! It was also scarcely a rout when the warriors, in accordance with Amerindian custom, decided simply to return to their villages after taking a few prisoners. Another event a little later helped to fan the legend that Dollard and his men had saved the colony at the cost of their lives. During the fall, some 600 warriors set out again for the French colony, but turned back after an accident that they interpreted as a bad omen. Cancelling a large-scale expedition for such a reason was as natural to Amerindians as it was foreign to European military logic.

Lieutenant coming off guard, around 1650.
David M. Stewart Museum, Montreal.

A fifer "to entertain the soldiers," around 1650.
David M. Stewart Museum, Montreal.

The drummer "needed by the army," around 1650.
David M. Stewart Museum, Montreal.

Insufficient Reinforcements

After the winter lull, the raids resumed in 1661 with even greater intensity, with about 100 Frenchmen falling victim to them. Some notice was taken in Paris of the appeals for assistance, and the Company of the Hundred Associates agreed to send 100 soldiers to Canada. They arrived at the same time as the new governor, Pierre Du Bois D'Avaugour, an experienced soldier and former cavalry colonel and brigadier who had served under the Maréchal de Turenne. However, in view of the hundreds of Iroquois lurking in the woods, the arrival of these few soldiers brought little sense of relief. In 1662, unchecked raids continued to take victims, including Lambert Closse, the major of Montreal.

It was therefore decided in high circles in France during 1662 to raise another hundred soldiers for Canada. They were divided into two companies, which arrived

French soldier around 1662. Reconstitution by Eugène Titieux.
Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence.

in October on board the *Aigle d'or* and the *Flûte royale*. These ships were also loaded "with goods and ammunition."[38] This was still highly insufficient for the needs of the colony, but at least a new factor was now at work: these soldiers had been raised and equipped under the supervision of a new privy counsellor and intendant of finance, Jean-Baptiste Colbert. A man of considerable stature, he was also in charge of the Royal Navy, from which these two ships were detached. The dispatch of these soldiers did not yet amount to the sending of a genuine royal regiment but was more a kind of subsidy granted by the king to the Company of the Hundred Associates. Most importantly, this assistance was the first indication of a new-found royal interest in the colonies generally and Canada in particular.

While the inhabitants waited for the promised substantial reinforcements, which never seemed to arrive, the first corps of volunteers was formed in Montreal on January 27, 1663: the Militia of the Holy Family of Jesus-Mary-Joseph.[39] Its purpose was to assist the town's garrison (which amounted at that time to only 12 men), especially in mounting guard. Some 139 men enrolled, forming 20 squads of seven men each, including a corporal elected by his comrades. Of the corporals, only four had military experience. This corps was dissolved when reinforcements arrived in 1665 and replaced by a permanent militia.

Fragile Colonies

Despite all their efforts to establish themselves in North America, the French could hardly feel that the results acheived by 1660 were satisfactory. The *Relations des Jésuites*, published in France, depicted Canada as a forbidding place. Descriptions of martyred missionaries were not likely to attract new colonists! Even though many soldiers were needed to protect a colony as exposed as this, the garrison remained skeletal. Acadia held little appeal, with its much coveted territories that eventually slipped through the fingers of the French into the hands of the English from Boston.

Nevertheless, despite all these misfortunes, New France did succeed in taking root in North America. It struggled to get by, remaining on a virtually perpetual war footing because no one was safe from the Iroquois. However, this was not the only colony to be established in North America. Around 1660, New Holland counted some 10,000 inhabitants and the English colonies some 90,000. New France, for its part, numbered a paltry 3,500 souls. Energetic steps needed to be taken if it was to prosper and expand over vast territories. Those that France did take were essentially military.

Chapter 4

THE KING'S SOLDIERS

When Cardinal Mazarin died in March 1661, young King Louis XIV decided to govern by himself and took over the reins of power. Casting a critical eye over "all parts of the state," he concluded that "confusion reigned everywhere in the realm."[40] France was either absent from the newly discovered lands, or its flag flew over small, undefended posts at the mercy of indigenous peoples. A wave of reforms swept through all French institutions, including the army. The 22-year-old sovereign thereby accomplished a veritable revolution, though "quietly and without difficulty."

In 1663, with the great reforms already well under way in France itself, the king and his ministers turned to the colonial problem. The first step that needed to be taken was breaking the monopoly of the trading companies and substituting royal authority. In order to replace them, the Companies of the East and West Indies were established. Unlike their predecessors, these companies were creatures of the king. Henceforth, the state treasury joined forces with private capital, the royal navy escorted merchant ships, and the king exercised considerable authority in overseeing the management of the colonies.

This was an important administrative change, but it did nothing to remedy the chronic weakness of the colonies. The king was aware of this and decided therefore to lend a strong hand to the French colonial world by bringing his army into play.

The Dispatch of Royal Troops

For the first time in French military history, troops were detached from the royal army to serve overseas. In 1664, 200 soldiers were sent to the West Indies, accompanying Marquis Prouville de Tracy, who had been appointed lieutenant-general of all the French Americas and who was bound eventually for Guyana and Martinique. These soldiers, the first of the contingent dispatched to the colonies, belonged to four infantry companies drawn from the Lignières, Chambellé,

Drummer of the Carignan-Salières Regiment, between 1665 and 1668, wearing the livery of the princes of Carignan. The sides of the drum are decorated with the Carignan coat of arms. Reconstitution by Michel Pétard.

Canadian Department of National Defence.

Poitou and Orléans regiments. During the next year, 1665, four other companies left the motherland, this time headed for Madagascar and the islands of the Indian Ocean.

It was Canada, however, that received "the lion's share" of the benefits from this new policy. In the summer of 1665, an entire regiment (1,000 men in 20 companies) landed in Quebec. The Carignan-Salières Regiment, which would achieve an almost legendary status in Canada, had arrived.

This regiment derived its name from Colonel Thomas-François de Savoie, Prince of Carignan, who raised it in 1644 in Piedmont in northern Italy. During the following decade, the recruiting for the regiment was done in France, and the Piedmontese character of the corps gradually ebbed away. The Treaty of the Pyrenees, signed by France and Spain in 1659, resulted in a reduction in the number of regiments in the army. Instead of being disbanded, Carignan's unit was merged with another, and on May 31 of that year, the Prince of Carignan was politely advised that, in his absence, the command had been turned over "to a person of great capacity and experience . . . Sieur de Salières . . . colonel of an infantry regiment that is now incorporated into yours."[41] The Salières Regiment had first been raised in 1630.

The Carignan-Salières Regiment in Canada

A few years after this merger, the Carignan-Salières Regiment had dwindled to eight companies, or 400 men, which was its strength when selected to serve in Canada. Since the king wished to send 1,000 men, 12 companies drawn from other regiments were incorporated into it: four from the Lallier Regiment, four from Chambellé, three from Poitou and one from Broglio. The arrival of these 600 men probably gave rise to the eighteenth-century tale according to which the Carignan-Salières Regiment had participated in 1664 in the campaign in Hungary against the Turks, together with Austrian and German troops. According to the tale, it performed "prodigies of valour in the war against the Turks."[42] Since the Carignan-Salières

Louis XIV (1638-1715), in the early 1660s.

National Archives of Canada (C2421).

Regimental colour presumed to be that of the Carignan-Salières Regiment in 1665.
Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence.

Regiment was not actually numbered among the five infantry regiments sent to Hungary in the French contingent, it seems likely that some of the soldiers that were transferred to it came from these regiments and were consequently veterans of this tough campaign.

The Carignan Regiment was one of the first in the French army to wear uniforms. Its soldiers were outfitted in brown and grey, with those who came to Canada carrying matchlock and flintlock muskets with bayonets, another novelty of the era. They left their pikes in France, since they were of little use against the Iroquois, but they all carried swords.

In April and May 1665, the 20 companies were reviewed in La Rochelle and declared complete, with "some even having more men than they needed."[43] They then boarded the ships bound for Canada. The regimental staff included Colonel de Salières, Lieutenant-Colonel Du Port, Major La Freydière, Assistant Major Féraud,

Adjutant La Combe-Pocatière, Chaplain d'Égriseilles and Surgeon Major Du Tartre. Each of the 20 companies had a captain, a lieutenant and an ensign as commissioned officers, and, as enlisted men, two sergeants, three corporals, five lance-corporals and forty soldiers, of whom at least one served as drummer. The first four companies arrived in Quebec beginning on June 19, 1665, followed by the colonel and eight other companies in August. The last eight companies came in September. In the meantime, the Marquis de Tracy had left Martinique with his soldiers. His fleet arrived in Quebec on June 30. Canada already had an acting governor, Monsieur de Courcelles, but the Marquis de Tracy was superior to him with power over all the colonies in North America.

In view of the fact that there were only 3,200 people of French ancestry in Canada, of whom about 500 lived in or near the town of Quebec, it is easy to guess the emotions raised in that little colony by the announcement that such a large force was arriving. There was enough commotion just trying to find lodgings for all 1,200 soldiers and 80 officers! It was not long before the troops were deployed. By the end of August, eight companies had been sent to build strongholds all along the Richelieu. These became the forts of Sorel, Chambly, Saint-Jean, Sainte-Thérèse and Sainte-Anne. The four companies from the West Indies were attached to the Carignan-Salières Regiment but not incorporated into it, retaining their identification with their respective regiments.

Officer and soldiers of the Carignan-Salières Regiment between 1665 and 1668. Reconstitution by Francis Back.
Canadian Parks Service.

Attacks on the Iroquois

The presence of so many troops radically altered the colony's military position, which had previously been so precarious. At last the towns could be defended by suitable garrisons, and forts built to block the Richelieu, the traditional path of the Iroquois. Enthusiasm was such that numerous Canadians volunteered to provide support to the Carignan-Salières Regiment. In just a few weeks, the small French colony, which had been huddling defensively for a quarter of a century, changed its outlook from that of besieged to that of aggressor. A new tactic of attacking the Iroquois in their own villages emerged.

This plan was not lacking in audacity. The newly arrived soldiers were unfamiliar with the country, its distances, Amerindian tactics and the climate. All these factors made such an expedition extremely perilous, but the commanders did not wish to lose the initiative. In January 1666, therefore, some 300 soldiers under the command of Governor de Courcelles, accompanied by 200 Canadian volunteers, left Quebec on foot and set off doggedly through the snow, headed for Iroquois country. This was an astonishing undertaking, since at the time neither Europeans nor Amerindians usually fought in the winter. At Fort Sainte-Thérèse, a group of volunteers from Montreal swelled the ranks of the expedition, which continued on its way, though the men did not know exactly where they were. On February 17, the Dutch in the village of Schenectady were amazed to see large numbers of French soldiers pouring out of the woods, some shod in snowshoes and many pulling toboggans carrying their meagre provisions. Since they were not at war, the Dutch were prepared to play host while the French recovered their strength. However, events overtook them. The French had barely arrived when a skirmish broke out with Mohawks, whom they had not seen until then. Then a British delegation arrived to call Courcelles to account for this incursion so close to the positions of the King of England! Courcelles was being faced with one surprise after another. He had found the Dutch when he thought he was among the Iroquois. New Holland was now the colony of New York, he learned, and Orange had been renamed Albany. Although the news had failed to reach Quebec before his departure, the English had in fact taken over the Dutch colony the year before. Even though the Mohawk villages were only a three-day march from Schenectady, the French were too exhausted and close to starvation to continue. They obtained some bread and peas from the Dutch, and, containing their anger, headed home.

The losses in this campaign are difficult to evaluate on both sides. The Mohawks claimed to have killed a dozen French soldiers, captured two, and found five others dead of hunger and cold. They themselves had only three warriors killed and five wounded. They added, though, that they had been unable to inflict serious damage on the French expedition, which was very mobile. All this was consistent with French reports. The colonists thought at first that they had lost about 60 men, but this was later revised because "most of the soldiers whom [they] believed lost [were] returning day by day."[44]

This first expedition of the Carignan-Salières Regiment turned out to be a total fiasco in relation to its objective of destroying the Iroquois villages. However, it had accomplished something almost unthinkable. A military campaign had been conducted in the middle of a Canadian winter, and more than 500 men had travelled over hundreds of kilometres of rough, wild country, in one of the world's most hostile environments.

The French drew many lessons from this large-scale winter expedition, the first ever to be undertaken in New France. First, they learned the crucial importance of reliable guides, because, in addition to all their other difficulties, the 30

Algonquins who were supposed to lead the way to the Iroquois country were of no use for nearly three weeks because they were drunk. Furthermore, they learned that solid logistics were needed, as well as suitable equipment and clothing for survival under such hostile conditions. This experience would serve them well later on.

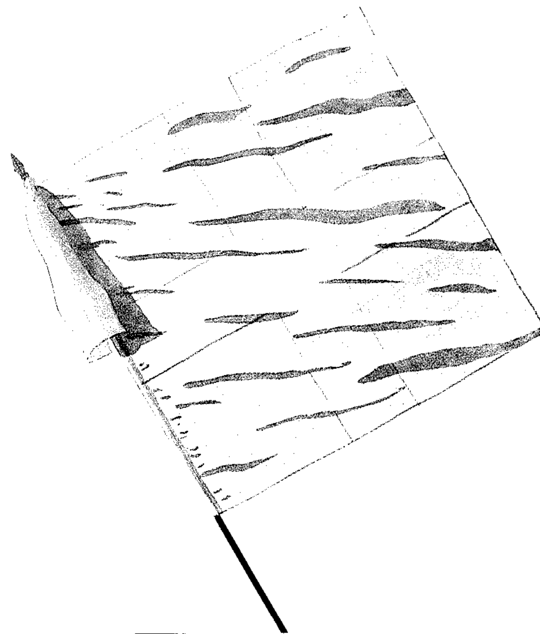
In the spring and summer of 1666, the French and Iroquois seesawed between armed skirmishes and attempts to arrange peace talks. In July, Captain de Sorel succeeded in approaching an Iroquois village with of a party of 200 soldiers and volunteers and about 80 Amerindian allies. The Iroquois sent out a peace envoy and liberated a few French captives, with whom Sorel returned to Quebec. This expedition convinced his superiors that Iroquois territory could easily be penetrated. Weary of the incessant peace talks punctuated with bloody incidents, the Marquis de Tracy decided upon a major expedition. In September 1666, at the head of a small army of 700 soldiers and 400 Canadian volunteers (including one battalion of Montrealers, the most experienced in Amerindian warfare) as well as 100 Huron and Algonquin allies, Tracy, Courcelles and Salières marched, drums beating, to the very heart of Iroquois territory. The Iroquois hid in the forest and offered no resistance as the invaders burned four of their villages as well as their corn crops. These proud warriors, invincible in guerilla warfare but impotent when attacked at home, discovered that their friends and neighbours, the English and Dutch, were not prepared to provide military support.

The future prospects of the Iroquois looked dim for other reasons as well. Their forests were being stripped of game, while the Ottawas, whose territory to the north still abounded with fur-bearing animals, were taking over the market. Finally, hundreds of Mohawks died of starvation in the famine caused by the destruction of their crops. For all these reasons, the Iroquois decided to rebuild their strength while waiting for better times. Their chiefs resolved to conclude a peace agreement and began talks

with the French. Few incidents occurred thereafter, and the peace treaty was eventually signed in July 1667, after long and tortuous negotiations.

Peace

The success of the Carignan-Salières Regiment ensured an era of peace and prosperity in New France. The colonists could finally settle down to their tasks without having to fear constantly for their lives. The forts along the Richelieu not only inhibited all movement from the south but also provided bases from which to carry war into the heart of Iroquois country. In other words, the initiative had passed into the hands of the French. The routes to the West and its territory rich in fur lay open to their



Colonel's colour of the Carignan-Salières Regiment.
Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence.

The White Flag as a Battle Flag

Nowadays, white flags signify surrender: one side signals its desire to capitulate to the other by hoisting a piece of white cloth. But this was not always the case. At the time of New France, raising a white flag signified instead a desire to join battle.

In order to understand the reasons for this about-face, one must go back to the origins of French flags. In the Middle Ages, the kings of France displayed a blue banner decorated with three fleurs-de-lis. During the Renaissance, they added blue or red banners with a white cross in the centre. By the end of the sixteenth century, blue had gained ascendancy over red and was in general use.

During the Wars of Religion in the early seventeenth century, however, white flags without any decoration were thought to symbolize purity and became the emblem of royal might. Thereafter, regimental flags were entirely white, both the cross and the quarters, signifying that the corps belonged to the Royal Army. Royal Navy ships also began flying white pennants and flags without any fleurs-de-lis or other decorations.

In 1632, the inhabitants of the settlement at Quebec were overjoyed to see white flags floating on the masts of the French ships that had come to take possession of the colony again. We can deduce from this that white flags had probably flown in Canada in the 1620s, or even earlier, or else the inhabitants would not have recognized them as emblematic of France.

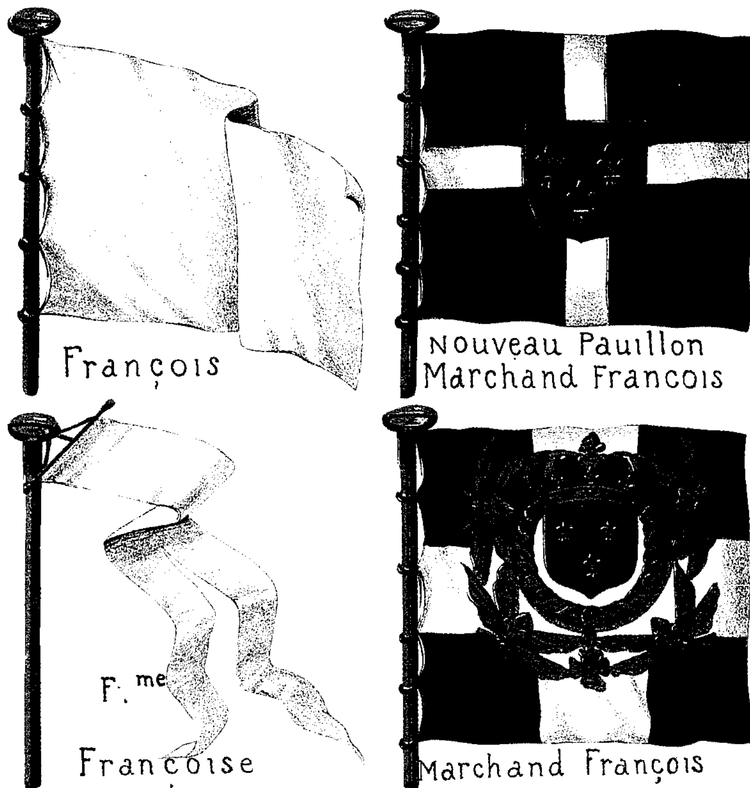
However, various other flags were also flown by both the navy and the merchant marine, since custom took precedence over regulations. In 1661, Louis XIV decided that he would

end the confusion by decreeing that the white flag was henceforth the official flag of the Royal Navy and would also fly over coastal forts and in the colonies, if this were not already the case.

Archival records and illustrations show that white flags were indeed flown throughout New France. Solid white flags could be found from Acadia and Plaisance to Louisbourg, Quebec, and in numerous forts. For the colonists and French soldiers of the time, flags and pennants were "always white, because white [was] the colour of France." Their attachment to this symbol can be clearly seen in the proud response of a Canadian privateer and his men to an English invitation to switch sides: "We responded without hesitation that we were born under the white flag and would die under it."

The royal order of 1661 assigned to the merchant marine "the former flag of the French nation," i.e., blue with a white cross, to which was added a blue shield in the centre decorated with three fleur-de-lis. However, the merchant marine preferred the white flag. Large trading companies (such as the Company of the Indies) and certain ports (such as Saint-Malo) obtained special permission allowing their ships to fly this flag.

Therefore, until the adoption of the French tricolour in 1790, the plain white flag flew at all battles, but it had nothing to do with capitulation. On the contrary, it became the symbol of furious struggles, both on land and at sea. So how did the white flag come to signify surrender? It seems that when the enemies of France surrendered, they were often compelled to fly it as a sign of capitulation. After France adopted the tricolour, flying the white flag continued among all belligerents as a sign of surrender or ceasefire.



French flags, around 1690.
Canadian Parks Service.

We should not overlook the white flag decorated with fleurs-de-lis, which is mentioned by so many history books as the essence of the Ancien Régime, and which often appears in encyclopedias. This beautiful flag, similar to the royal French flag with the addition of the royal coat of arms in the centre, could only be flown in the presence of the king (similar to the modern flag of the governor general of Canada). It was flown officially only very rarely in France itself, and not at all in Canada. Sometimes, Amerindian allies were given white flags decorated with the royal coats of arms, such as La Vérendrye's gift to the Mandans in December, 1738. However, these were only variations on the original. The only flag raised over the forts of New France was the white flag of France.

explorers and traders. Finally, the nations annihilated by the Iroquois were replaced by Ottawas, Ojibwas and Algonquins as trading partners and military allies. The military campaigns had indeed bestowed enormous benefits on New France.

Military Colonization

The king had another assignment for his troops in Canada – one that had been conceived before their departure but kept secret until the end of hostilities. New France was only thinly populated. In order to rectify this situation, the king hoped to encourage the soldiers of the 24 companies "to remain in the country" by providing them with the means "to establish themselves there."[45] Accordingly, the officers were offered seigneuries. This was most attractive, because to own a tract of land, that is, to become a seigneur, was almost impossible in France. Some 30 officers therefore took up this offer in 1667 and 1668. The titles to most of the new seigneuries were officially turned over to the new proprietors five years later. Some bore the names of their new title holders. Thus the present towns of Berthier, Chambly, Contrecoeur, Boisbriand, Saint-Ours and Sorel commemorate the first seigneurs of those localities, former captains in the Carignan-Salières Regiment. Lavaltrie, Soulanges and Varennes bear the names of former lieutenants, while Brucy and Verchères were ensigns who also left their mark on place names in Quebec.

Ordinary soldiers were also given numerous inducements to stay. Instead of returning to France, possibly to live as serfs, they could own land and establish themselves on it with substantial state assistance in the form of livestock and food. What could be more appealing? Four hundred and four soldiers and 12 sergeants allowed themselves to be persuaded. In France itself, the feeling of confidence engendered by the vigorous action of the king's soldiers certainly seems to have encouraged emigration, for, at about this time, more than 2,000 people decided to leave for Canada. With this considerable influx, the population of New France doubled between 1665 and 1672, rising to 7,000.

These steps did not result in the complete dissolution of the Carignan-Salières Regiment. The two colonels'companies returned to France with Colonel de Salières in June 1668, and the regiment again began recruitment there.[46]

A "Royal" Garrison

Four companies of 75 men each, including officers, were kept in Canada. Two of these companies were assigned to Montreal and two to Chambly. Thirty men from the latter companies were detached to Saint-Jean and 20 to Fort Sainte-Anne. These four companies mounted guard until 1670, when they were reinforced by five companies of 50 men each, dispatched from France and commanded by officers of the Carignan-Salières Regiment. These troops apparently remained affiliated with their regiment back in France through a kind of detached company status. Intendant Jean Talon noted that Captain de Laubia "of Carignan-Salières" commanded one of the "companies . . . sent back to Canada in 1670."[47] However, all these companies were disbanded in 1671, with the officers urged not to return to France and "all soldiers strongly encouraged to work on clearing and cultivating the land."[48]

The dissolution of these companies certainly helped to increase the population of New France, but it also left a very thin garrison in place: two sergeants and 25 soldiers in Quebec and only 10 soldiers each in Trois-Rivières and Montreal. With the 20 Governor General's Guards and the 10 soldiers at Fort Frontenac, whom Sieur de La Salle had been obliged to maintain "at his expense"[49] since 1675, the total amounted to 77 men. The shortage of professional soldiers left the forts on the Richelieu practically undefended. Moreover, relations between the French and the Iroquois had been slowly deteriorating throughout this period.

The Iroquois, observing the weakening of French defences, realized that they could take up the war again. In order to avenge the humiliations they had suffered, they attempted after the peace was concluded to neutralize the new Amerindian allies of the French and to seize control of the fur trade. In the French colony, fears increased that the 2,500 Five Nations warriors, well equipped with English guns, would attempt to destroy the western tribes who were favourable to the French, as they had destroyed the Hurons. The French trading posts and Jesuit missions recently established at Michilimackinac and in Illinois were also threatened. The situation grew graver throughout the 1670s, but the danger was contained, thanks in large part to the diplomatic skills of Louis de Buade, Count Frontenac. However, he had scarcely been replaced as governor general by Joseph-Antoine Lefebvre de la Barre in 1682, when the Illinois, Miamis and Ottawas were attacked and forced to ask for French protection. By now the new governor general had only a handful of soldiers available to defend this vast territory and help his allies. His proposal for a general conference was contemptuously dismissed by the Iroquois. However, he could still draw on an important resource which the colony had been developing throughout the previous decade and which would be called upon to play a decisive role in its defence: a militia, numbering about 1,000 men.

The Establishment of a Canadian Militia

Before 1669, French colonists in Canada had not been obliged to serve occasionally as soldiers, except in emergency situations. Furthermore, no permanent military organization existed to mobilize them. However, a letter from Louis XIV changed all that. On April 3, 1669, he ordered Courcelles, who was governor at the time, to "divide" his subjects in Canada into companies "with regard for their

Soldier of the Carignan-Salières Regiment between 1665 and 1668. Reconstitution by Francis Back.
Canadian Parks Service.

proximity, and, after having divided them in this way, to select captains, lieutenants and ensigns to command them . . . to issue orders that they assemble once a month to practise handling arms." Care should be taken, he added, that these men "always be well armed and always have the powder, lead and fuses necessary to use their arms when needed."[50]

These few lines marked the official birth of the Canadian militia. They set in motion a general organization and mobilization program that would take many years to complete. It fell to Frontenac, who succeeded Courcelles in 1672, to carry out the considerable organizational work required throughout the colony. In so doing, he certainly drew inspiration from the coastguard militia in France at the time, for the Canadian militia was similar in many ways.

For example, it seemed natural to use parishes as the rallying points. Each parish therefore created its own militia company, with the more populous parishes having several. The structure of these companies was an exact replica of the regular troops. At the head was a captain, assisted by a lieutenant and an ensign, then a few sergeants and corporals, followed by ordinary soldiers. In all, there would be about 50 men per company.

All the parishes were attached to one of the three districts into which the colony was divided: Quebec, Trois-Rivières or Montreal. Each district had a militia staff consisting of a colonel, a lieutenant-colonel and a major. The district governors commanded their local militias, while the governor general of the entire colony was the supreme commander. However, the intendant could requisition militiamen to deal with civilian public duties.

All men between the ages of 16 and 60 who were fit to bear arms had to join the militia company of their parish and participate in its activities. This amounted to between a quarter and a fifth of the colony's total population. There were about 3,500 militiamen in 1710, and by 1750, the militia had grown to 11,687 men, divided into 165 companies commanded by 724 officers and 498 sergeants. Only religious orders and seigneurs were exempt from service, although almost all the latter were officers in either the regular troops or the militia.

Irregular Soldiers and Hardened Voyageurs

French colonists of the second half of the seventeenth century were people who had developed many talents, by virtue of their very way of life. The entire population of New France was gathered along the banks of the St. Lawrence River, where many owned land. It was not unusual to see people who farmed in the summer become hunters in the fall and then adopt other occupations in the winter, such as trapping or trading. This required them to cover great distances on snowshoes, then return to their fields in the spring. There were also fishing expeditions, when they learned how to handle canoes. One observer provided the following description of the Canadians of this era: "They are well proportioned, agile, vigorous, in perfect health, able to withstand all sorts of fatigue . . . and bellicose . . . born in a country with good air, nourished on good, abundant food . . . they are free from birth to engage in fishing and hunting and to go on canoe trips, during which

A guardsman of the Marquis de Tracy, between 1665 and 1667. Reconstitution by Michel Pétard.
Canadian Department of National Defence.

The Governor General's Guard

The Canadian militia now includes regiments assigned to guarding the governor general. These units, composed of volunteer militiamen, were created during the 1860s and 70s. However, a Governor General's Guard, staffed by regular soldiers, had existed since the reign of Louis XIV.

Beginning in the Middle Ages, important officials were generally escorted by a few men-at-arms to ensure their safety. The procedure in Canada was of course simpler than in France, at least until the arrival of the first real guard corps in 1665. It was a unit of 17 men-at-arms, commanded by a captain, a lieutenant and a cornet (a second lieutenant who carried the company standard). These soldiers formed the escort for the Marquis Prouville de Tracy, the lieutenant-general of French America. In keeping with the king's wishes, they wore cassocks similar to those of the musketeers in his own guard.

As the Marquis moved through the streets, he would be accompanied by his entire retinue. Four pages and part of his guard preceded him, and he was followed by several officers, led by the captain of the guard, who was also his aide-de-camp. When the Marquis de Tracy returned to France in 1667 with his retinue, his replacement, Governor Courcelles, was not considered worthy enough to be entitled to his own company of guards.

The appointment of Louis de Buade, Count Frontenac, in 1672, resulted in the creation of a permanent corps of personal guards for the governor general. The energetic Count Frontenac used his guards as a kind of personal police and had them arrest several people, including the governor of Montreal, Nicolas Perrot. This gesture was thought excessive, and it led to Frontenac's recall in 1682. As a result of these abuses, it was specified that the only function of the Governor General's Guard was to ensure his personal safety.

From 1672 until the end of the French Regime, the guard consisted officially of "a company of 20 mounted men-at-arms, known as carabineers," including a captain, a lieutenant and a cornet. Reality, however, was often quite different. First, the men were on foot. Second, since their wages were included in the stipend allowed the governor general, they could become fictional at times, depending on his financial circumstances. By the late seventeenth century, governors general usually limited their guard to two or three men, adding sufficient reinforcements on holidays and ceremonial occasions to bring it up to full strength. Early in the eighteenth century, the Marquis de Vaudreuil had only two men in his retinue, while the wealthy Marquis de La Jonquière disembarked at the town of Quebec on August 4, 1749 with much pomp and circumstance, preceded by his entire company.

Little is known about the clothing and armaments of this guard. However, it appears that Count Frontenac's guards wore cassocks in 1673, as did those of the Marquis de Vaudreuil (1703-25), although there is no known description of their clothing. The Marquis de La Jonquière's guards were dressed upon their arrival at Quebec in 1749 in "green costumes, their muskets on their shoulders." This was obviously the Marquis' own livery, and seems to indicate that guards, after 1672, wore the colours and personal coats of arms of their masters, as was the custom in France.

there is much exercise."[51] Another added that Canadians were "very brave" and more skilled at shooting muskets "than any others in the world."[52]

This would seem to be a people with excellent aptitudes for mounting military raids, but Canadians were rather loath to participate in military activities. Frontenac noted that the militiamen were reluctant, compared with professional soldiers, to leave their homes and that they were not very useful for long expeditions. However, this pertained to the relatively peaceful years of the 1670s. Twenty-five years later, attitudes had changed considerably as a result of the intermittent war conducted against them by the Iroquois since the early 1680s. By now, the robust Canadians were taking part in all the raids, alongside their Amerindian allies, even though the expeditions were so difficult that there "were not 300 men of the regular troops able to follow them."[53]

Acadia

Louis XIV did not overlook Acadia in his new colonial policy. It too received its King's soldiers, although it had to wait until ceded back to France by the Treaty of Breda in 1667 and abandoned by the Massachusetts militia, which had occupied it since 1654. Actual repossession did not occur until three years later, in August 1670, when Sieur de Grandfontaine landed in Acadia as the new governor and demanded that the British cede the colony in compliance with the treaty. He was escorted by a company of 50 soldiers, of whom he was the captain. This company was the sixth from the Carignan-Salières contingent sent back to New France, and Sieur de Grandfontaine was himself a veteran of the Iroquois campaigns of 1665 and 1666. It was the first time that royal troops were sent to Acadia.

Like the five companies dispatched to Canada, Grandfontaine s company was disbanded in 1671 and its soldiers given an opportunity to remain in the colony. This prospect seemed to please them for several were already engaged in fishing and "almost all the soldiers [were] inclined to become

Coats sent by Louis XIV to Charles XI of Sweden around 1687. Louis XIV required his troops to wear uniforms because they made them look impressive, especially during reviews, and were a source of pride and emulation among the soldiers.
Royal Swedish Army Museum.

settlers and even to marry, if some girls [came] from France."[54]

They would not have much time to do so. In 1672, Louis XIV declared war on Holland. Two years later, a privateer flying the Dutch flag showed up in Acadian waters. There were no French ships defending of the coast, and even the forts were weak. The French resisted as best as they were able, but could not prevent Pentagoët and Jemsec from being taken and pillaged. The governor, Captain de Chambly, and his officers were taken prisoner and carried off to Boston. Liberated shortly thereafter, because the British had remained neutral in the Franco-Dutch conflict, they returned to Acadia. However, the colony remained without regular troops or even militiamen, and therefore practically undefended, throughout the 1680s.

Placentia, Newfoundland

In the mid-seventeenth century, the British and French both felt a mounting need to establish permanent naval bases near the Grand Banks of Newfoundland so that their cod fishermen could stop to provision their boats and seek protection against enemy ships. In 1651 Oliver Cromwell, the Lord Protector of Great Britain, appointed a governor to St. John's on the eastern shore of the island.

The harbour of Placentia, in southeastern Newfoundland, was already used by French fishermen and seemed like the ideal place for the France of Louis XIV to establish its own base. The first colony was founded in 1660 and provided with a small garrison in 1662. However, the soldiers soon mutinied, killing the governor, Du Perron, and pillaging the fort, before murdering each other. The eight survivors set out for the British settlements, so that when ships from France brought out about 20 colonists and soldiers the following year, they found the colony in ruins and the fort abandoned. More soldiers arrived in 1667, but thereafter the garrison seems to have become virtually non-existent. The base struggled along in this condition until the arrival of more troops in 1687.

An Era of Progress

The dispatch of the Carignan-Salières Regiment brought an era of peace to the French colony in North America, which it had despaired of ever seeing again, and gave a strong impetus to colonization. As a result, this period was one of the most decisive in the history of New France. The dismissal of the soldiers weakened the colony's defences but gave rise to another royal initiative which proved just as beneficial: the founding of a Canadian militia. These steps provided a solid base for initial forays to the west and south and for the realization of a dream as vast in scope as America itself: the creation of a great French empire. However, French control over access to the continent via the St. Lawrence remained weak, especially in Acadia and Newfoundland. Furthermore, another enemy besides the Iroquois was looming on the horizon: the British colonies, already well-populated and increasingly aggressive.

COSTUMES

Soldier in the service of the Company of the Hundred Associates in Canada, around 1650.

A guardsman of the Marquis de Tracy, between 1665 and 1667.

Soldier from Gibbon's Regiment in Newfoundland, 1697-98.

Soldier dressed for a winter campaign, between 1690 and 1700.

Sergeant of the Compagnies franches de la Marine of Acadia and Plaisance, between 1701 and 1713.

Sergeant of the Compagnies franches de la Marine of Canada, between 1701 and 1716.

Artilleryman of the "Board of Ordnance" detachment, between 1700 and 1716.

Soldier of the British independent companies in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, between 1698 and 1717.

Soldier of Karrer's Swiss Regiment, around 1725.

Drummer of the Compagnies franches de la Marine of New France, between 1716 and 1730.

Officer of the Compagnies franches de la Marine in New France, around 1735.

Soldier of the Compagnies franches de la Marine in New France, around 1740.

Drummer of Karrer's Swiss Regiment, around 1745.

Gunner of a canonnier-bombardier company in New France, between 1743 and 1750.

Officer of the Compagnies franches de la Marine, around 1750.

Prosperous-looking bourgeois belonging to one of two reserve militia companies, mobilized in Montreal and Quebec in 1752.

Soldier of the Compagnies franches de la Marine in New France, between 1750 and 1755.

Chapter 5

THE *COMPAGNIES FRANCHES DE LA MARINE* OF CANADA

In 1674, during Louis XIV's war with Holland, a fleet commanded by Admiral Ruyter arrived off Martinique, which lay practically undefended. Although the attack was repulsed, as if by a miracle, a stern warning had been delivered. The court at Versailles realized that France had come extremely close to losing the most important of its islands in the Caribbean as a result of failing to maintain a proper garrison. The Ministry of the Navy, which had been responsible since its inception in 1669 for both the home battle fleet and the naval forces in the Americas, immediately raised 470 men and eight officers for duty overseas. They arrived in Martinique before the end of the year. The weak defences in all the other French islands and in Guyana were strengthened as well during the 1670s. This was the beginning of permanent colonial garrisons maintained by the government, in other words, the foundation of the French colonial army. In spite of their affiliation with the Ministry of the Navy, these *Troupes de la Marine* – Navy troops – stationed overseas were not shipboard marines, but true colonial troops.

In New France, the militias that had been established could not provide alone for the defence of the colony, which found itself exposed throughout the 1670s and 1680s to enemy threats and attacks. In order to remedy this situation and encourage French expansion in America, Louis XIV opted for the same military solution that had been adopted in the Caribbean, namely the establishment of permanent, strong garrisons funded by the royal treasury. In Canada, these garrisons were increasingly required to recruit troops from the local gentry. This, then, was the origin of the regular Canadian armed forces.

Society in New France was profoundly affected by this new expression of royal will. Demobilized soldiers became the main source of new colonists, and officers henceforth formed much of the colonial elite. Military officers thereby acquired considerable influence over all aspects of colonial life. However, these

Officer of the Compagnies franches de la Marine of Canada in full dress uniform, around 1690. Although officers were not required to wear any specific uniform, several wore the same colours as their soldiers at the time, namely grey-white and blue. The sword and spontoon, or half-pike, were regulation armaments. Reconstitution by Michel Pétard.
Canadian Department of National Defence.

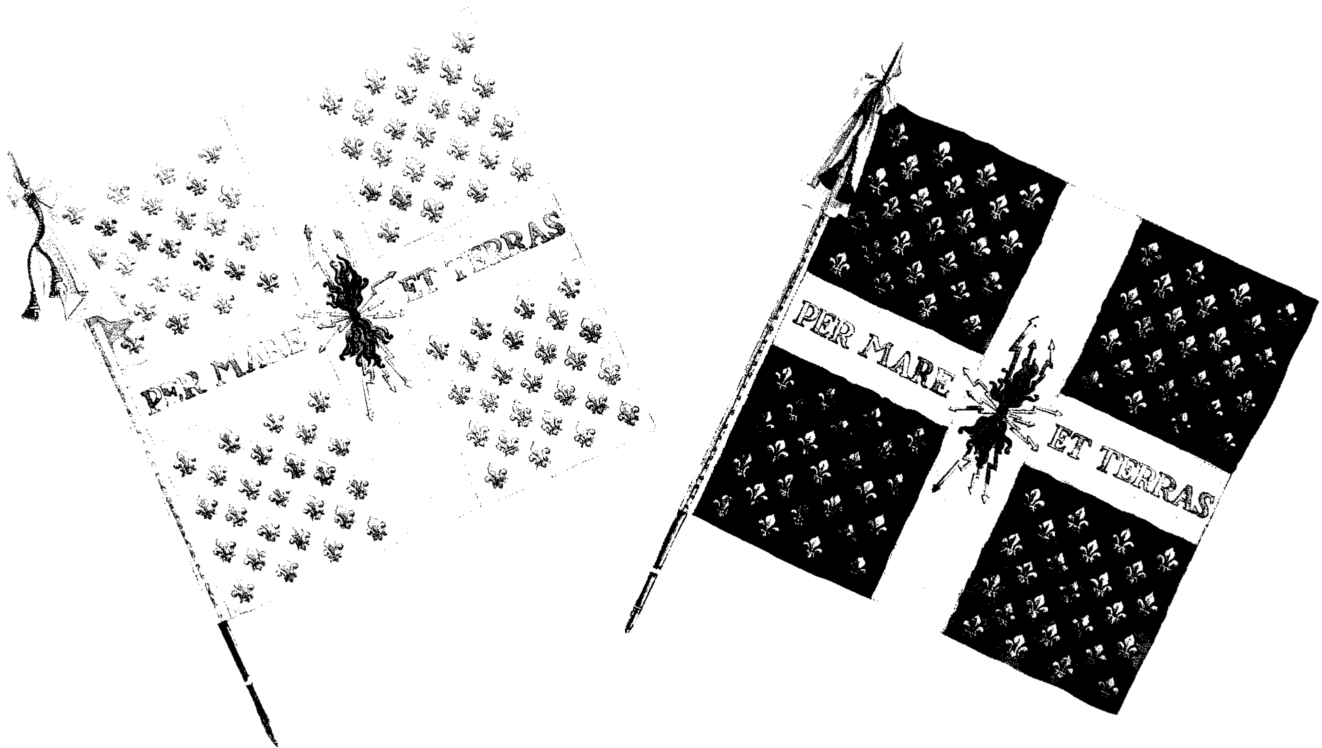
officers distinguished themselves mostly by the sword, developing original and highly effective combat tactics.

This important phase of Canadian military and social history began toward the end of 1683. In June of that year, La Barre, finding himself unable to contain resurgent Iroquois hostility, sent a ship to France with an urgent message asking for troops and arms to meet the desperate military situation. The Minister of the Navy, the Marquis de Seignelay, did not learn until August of the governor general's appeal for help. By then, the convoy of ships had already set sail for Canada. Nevertheless, 150 soldiers were immediately recruited in Rochefort and dispatched on board the frigate *La Tempête*. By early November, the ship arrived in Quebec and three independent companies of the Navy or *Compagnies franches de la Marine* – as these troops serving overseas were called, as opposed to the land army serving only in Europe – arrived in New France.

Canadian Officers

During the 1680s, these Navy troops in the colony increased to some 1,500 officers and soldiers. In the first half of the eighteenth century, this number settled to around 900. From 1689 to 1749, the garrison consisted of 28 companies.

The Compagnies franches de la Marine in Canada soon stood out on account of the high proportion of officers to regular soldiers. After 1687, each company theoretically had three officers instead of two, although in fact a fourth was even added, recruited from the families of Canadian gentlemen. The latter was called the second ensign or "little officer."[55] This was an initiative of Governor Denonville, who had noted the excellent fighting qualities of the young men from the new Canadian gentry. Over the



White "colonel" colour and blue and red unit colour of the Compagnies franches de la Marine in the eighteenth century. Reconstitution by Michel Pétard. Canadian Department of National Defence.

years, this measure was to have a considerable impact on social and military life of the colony.

Another practice, which probably began during the 1680s, also encouraged the integration of Canadians into the regular troops. The families of officers who had remained in the colony often sent their young sons into the Compagnies franches de la Marine as cadets in the hope that they would eventually become commissioned officers. Thus, in the early eighteenth century, the troops contained "bright youths of quality . . . sons of officers . . . paid as soldiers,"[56] whose promotion was encouraged. A quarter century later, however, complaints arose that the companies contained too many cadets "who were mere children"[57] taking the places of real soldiers. The king ordered that this situation be corrected by restricting the numbers of cadets. Then in 1731, a royal order was issued officially establishing the rank of cadet in the Canadian forces, with one per company. As a distinctive mark, they wore a blue and white cord on the shoulder of their uniforms, giving rise to the nickname "cadets of the aiguillette." However, the 28 positions available with the Compagnies franches de la Marine were not sufficient to provide for all the officers' sons who wished to join, and "soldier cadets" – a kind of junior cadet – made their unofficial appearance. They were eventually recognized officially and assigned one to a company in 1750.

The cadets were counted as soldiers in reviews and inspections, and were expected to learn how to handle weapons by serving with them. However, they also enjoyed the protection of officers (who were often

Louis de Buade, Count Frontenac (1622-98). There is no known portrait of this celebrated governor general. Engraving.
From *Half a Century of Conflict*, George N. Morang & Company, Toronto.

family members), and were occasionally given opportunities to exercise command. With close ties to both the officer corps and the regular soldiers, these young men were an excellent source of information on the morale of the forces.

A sort of Canadian military elite was therefore emerging. In 1683, all the officers were French; by 1690, however, about a quarter were born in Canada. This proportion rose to about half in the 1720s and finally to three-quarters in the early 1750s. In addition, those officers who were born in France generally remained in the colony, thereby swelling the numbers of this military elite.

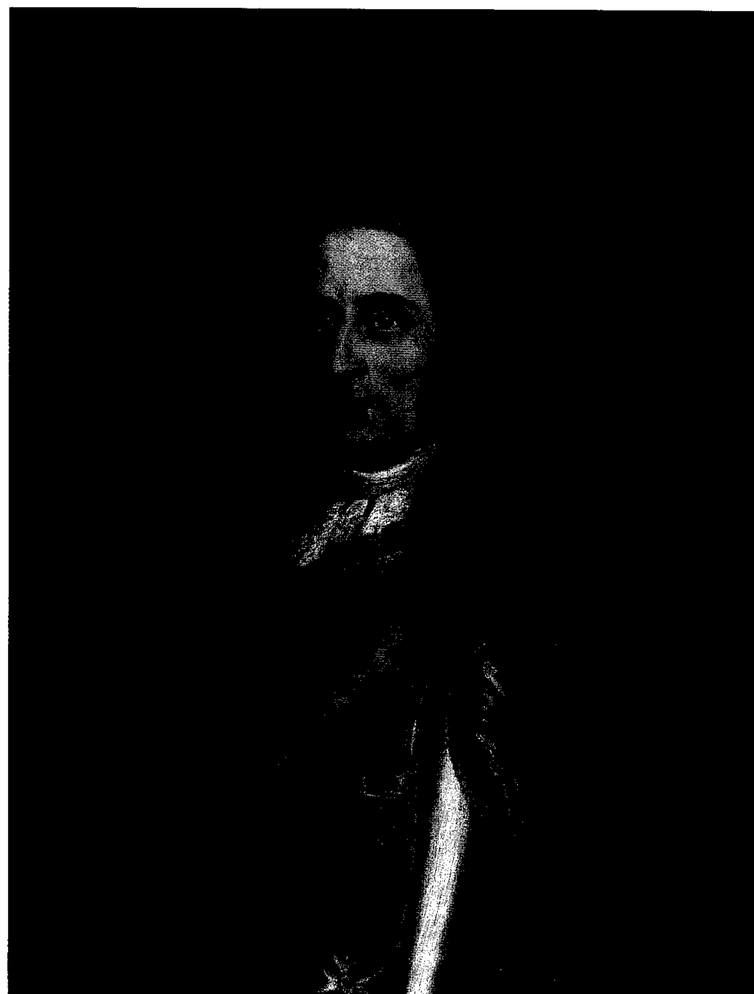
Their place of birth is, in fact, a less than perfect criterion for judging the "Canadianization" of the officer corps. Should one really consider as foreigners those French officers who came to Canada, established roots here, had families and adopted the customs of the country, before finally being buried in the land where they had spent so much of their lives? This seems illogical when one considers that their own sons, born in the colony, made up most of those who bolstered the official numbers of Canadians in comparison with French. The "Canadianization" of French officers proceeded in another way as well. By the end of the seventeenth century, they were clearly learning and adapting very well, as their years of service increased, to the art of war as practised in Canada. Thus, it could easily be argued that the officer corps was almost entirely Canadian by the 1720s, in essence if not by birth.

Canadian Campaigns

The arrival of the Navy troops, in response to La Barre's appeal for assistance, prompted an immediate change in tactics. It was a small army that set out for Fort Frontenac in 1684 on an expedition against the Senecas, one of the five Iroquois nations. However, La Barre was not as bold as previous governors, and agreed to a treaty without first engaging in battle, a step which did not impress the Iroquois at all.

As a result, the next governor general, the Marquis de Denonville, was forced to undertake a second expedition against the same Iroquois in 1687. He set out at the head of

an army of 800 soldiers, 1,100 militiamen, and 400 Amerindian allies. In a desperate attempt to save their villages, the Senecas joined battle. Though startled at first by the surprise attack and the terrible whoops of the natives, the French rallied and the Compagnies franches de la Marine charged, scattering the enemy. In their flight, the Amerindians abandoned muskets and blankets. Once again, their villages and crops were burned. Detachments of the Compagnies franches pushed as far as Michilimackinac, where Lake Michigan meets Lake Superior, thereby preventing the Iroquois and English from seizing control of the fur trade in the West.



Jacques Testard de Montigny, an officer in the Compagnies franches de la Marine, around 1715. He took part in several campaigns, including the Schenectady, Pemaquid and Newfoundland raids, before being named commandant of several forts in the West.

Château Ramezay, Montreal.

The Strategic Defence of Canada

The Iroquois were not the only enemies whom the French officers arriving during the 1680s would have to face. It was a decade during which the signs of imminent conflict between England and France were increasing. How could a British invasion be repulsed when the colony was spread out over such a wide area and defended by so few men? This was the critical question to which an answer had to be found.

From a defensive point of view, good fortifications remained the most important measure. However, when they existed at all in the colony, they were in a deplorable condition. It was decided therefore to restore Fort Frontenac and surround

Montreal with a palisade, since these two places were most vulnerable to attack by the Iroquois, the allies of the English. Quebec had the advantage of being a natural fortress, but it still had no surrounding wall, only a few batteries, and a paltry fort, Château Saint-Louis, which doubled as the residence of the governor general. Although the court at Versailles believed at first that Quebec was safe from attack by sea, this view was revised in 1690, and the town was provided with surrounding fortifications consisting of 16 redoubts connected by a palisade. These were the first of numerous defensive works to enclose the town within walls.

Soldier dressed for a winter campaign, between 1690 and 1700. Reconstitution by Francis Back.
Canadian Parks Service.

Amerindian warriors, first half of the eighteenth century. Despite their adoption of many European weapons and articles of clothing, the first nations preserved a resolutely Amerindian look by integrating all this with their tattoos and body paint. The central figure is a chief. Reconstitution by David Rickman.
Canadian Department of National Defence.

European Tactics: Impractical in Canada

While the French officers responsible for inspecting fortifications in New France could draw on what they had learned from military textbooks as well as the advice of their counterparts back home, the situation was entirely different for military strategists pondering the defence of New France in the midst of the wild and vast territories of North America. Compounding the problems of geography were rigorous winters, which were unparalleled in western Europe except in parts of Scandinavia and Russia.

The available treatises on the art of war were written for armies campaigning in France, Germany or Italy, in accordance with European battle tactics calling for compact units of musketeers protected by pikemen for battle on foot. Nowadays, the idea of lines of infantry advancing over open terrain toward the enemy, their brightly coloured uniforms making them easy targets and their weapons gleaming in the sun, seems suicidal. Why did they not hide? The answer was that the limited effectiveness of firearms made mass tactics necessary. Musket fire only began to be effective at ranges of about a hundred metres, when concentrated in salvos, because muskets were still too inaccurate to hit particular targets. What was needed was one mass of men firing at another.

None of these military techniques could be applied in Canada. There

were no roads, and therefore no field artillery or cavalry to send against the invaders to check their advance. If English soldiers and New England militiamen did advance into New France, the available troops would probably not suffice to overcome them in any case. For all these reasons, and even though this potential enemy waged war in the traditional European fashion, French officers of the 1680s realized that most of their knowledge and experience of war was of little help in the colony.

Canadian Tacticians

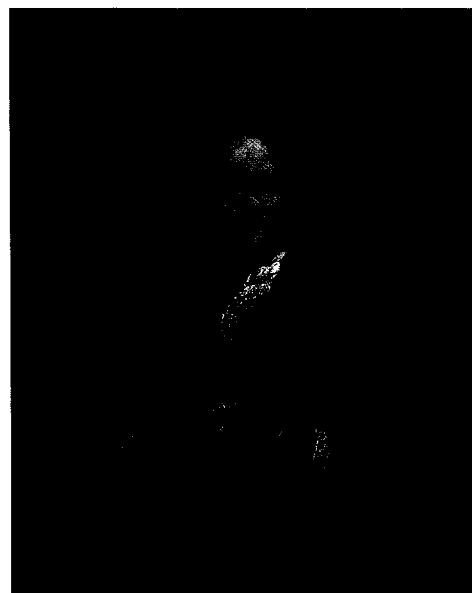
There was no other solution than to adopt new methods of waging war suited to the country. Canadians, who had long observed Amerindian ways and were very familiar with the countryside, were the ones who developed these tactics. Among them, Charles Le Moyne and Joseph-François Hertel de La Fresnière had a decisive influence.

While still young soldiers, one in the Montreal garrison and the other in Trois-Rivières, Le Moyne and Hertel de La Fresnière took part in numerous skirmishes with the Iroquois. Both were captured and adopted by the Iroquois, and spent their time profitably learning the language and studying Iroquois customs.

Upon regaining his liberty, Charles Le Moyne turned to business and did well. He also acted as an interpreter for various governors, without abandoning his military activities. He was in command of the Montreal volunteers in 1666 at the time of the expeditions of the Carignan-Salières Regiment. He fathered numerous sons, to whom he passed along his observations on the art of war as it should be practised here. Several of these sons died sword in hand. They were Le Moyne de Longueuil, de Sainte-Hélène, de Maricourt, de Châteauguay, and d'Iberville – great names in early Canadian military history.

For his part, Joseph-François Hertel de La Fresnière was born to arms, so to speak, in Trois-Rivières in 1642, for his father served in the garrison, having arrived from France in 1626. Young Hertel therefore became a soldier himself before eventually going into business, like Charles le Moyne. Hertel also served as an interpreter and as a militiaman during the campaigns of the Carignan-Salières Regiment. He too had many sons, who followed

Melchior de Jordy de Cabanac, officer in the Compagnies franches de la Marine. François de Beaucourt. Oil from around 1720. National Archives of Canada (C10540).



The First Expeditionary Corps

In the twentieth century, we are accustomed to seeing our soldiers leave for distant lands. But which was the first Canadian corps to serve outside North America?

This honour may well have fallen to a company of Canadian volunteers who took part in the capture of Nevis Island in the British West Indies in 1706. D'Iberville mentioned this group of "Canadians making up a corps" who landed on the island before him "to facilitate [his] arrival." Like the Navy troops and the West Indian volunteers, these Canadians possessed "the essential characteristics" of bravery, discipline and steadfastness in battle. After the capture of the island, D'Iberville had the company of Canadians and a company of grenadiers mounted on horseback in order to escort him as he reconnoitered the island.

This "company of Canadian volunteers" numbered 40 men under the command of "M. de Mousseau." They seem to have served at times as shock troops and at times as D'Iberville's personal guard. As is typical for expeditionary corps, the company existed only for this particular campaign and was probably dissolved after D'Iberville died in Havana.

his footsteps into battle, among them his namesake, as well as de Moncours and de Rouville – a dynasty of distinguished officers.

An Original Doctrine of War

Impressed by his experience with indigenous peoples, Governor General de La Barre appointed Hertel de La Fresnière commander of the allied Amerindian nations. It was at this time that his real military exploits began, based above all on his revolutionary concept of the art of war.

Like Charles Le Moyne, Hertel believed that the only way to fight effectively in North America was to adopt the tactics of the natives and unite them with European discipline. Canadian soldiers serving in corps on raids assumed much more independence and individual responsibility than their European colleagues marching mechanically into battle row on row, to the sound of beating drums. In Canada, Hertel believed that it was necessary to move quickly in small groups; to approach the enemy without being seen, like scouts; to surprise him, and then to disappear immediately. This was the classic surprise attack of the Amerindians, reinforced by perfect coordination and thoughtful discipline. Combatants were expected to think quickly rather than reacting "automatically" as in Europe, which is too often thought to be the only kind of military discipline. Commanders, for their part, directed not homogeneous armies but forces with considerable differences in discipline and culture, since they included professional officers, French soldiers, Canadian militiamen and Amerindian allies. The commanders' ability to reconcile the strengths of these people and focus them all on the desired outcome became a factor of prime importance. Finally, retreats had to be be rapid and well planned, so that enemy forces could not pursue closely, but at most only follow the footprints. This was a major difference, because if the enemy was in hot

pursuit, a race ensued with perpetual harassment. However, if withdrawal was rapid, the enemy had to follow at a distance, providing enough time to lay a murderous trap, which might discourage him from continuing. These, then, were the basic principles that enabled Canadians to gain victory after victory, seizing vast tracts of territory from other European nations who also hoped to establish hegemony in America.

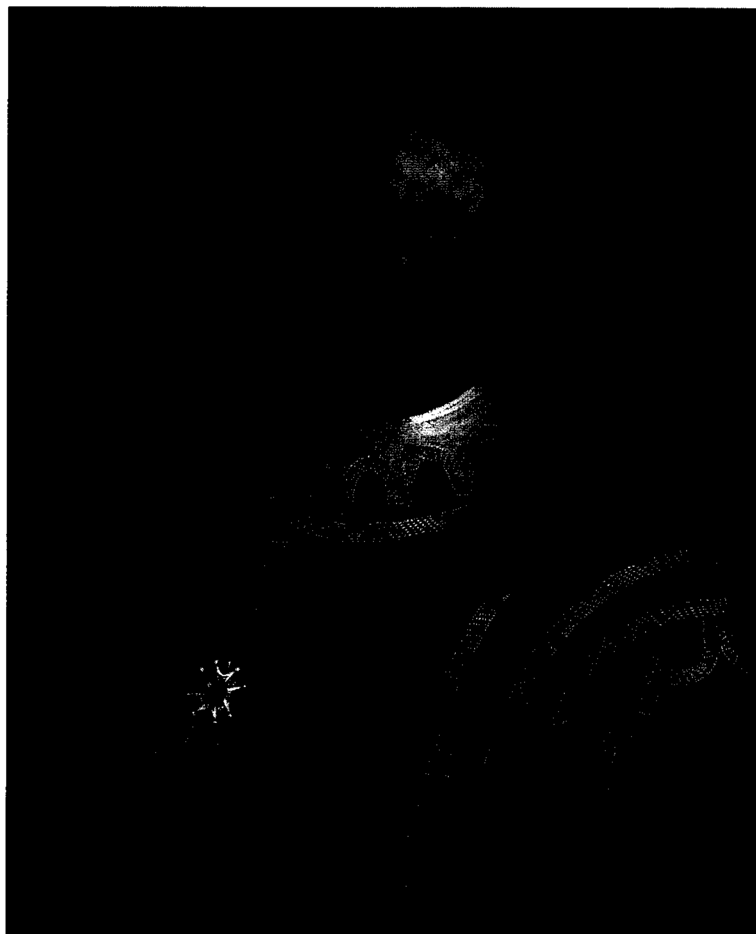
Organization of Expeditions

Hertel de La Fresnière believed that a mixed force, consisting of men familiar with the climate and accustomed to long, exhausting journeys across woods and rivers, could deliver blows deep within enemy territory. The ideal war party was composed, he believed, of Canadian officers with an excellent knowledge of the country and Amerindian customs; a few hardened, elite soldiers from the regular troops; *coureurs de bois*; "Canadian *voyageurs*" (as the canoeists and transporters were known); and allied Amerindians. Finally, the commanding officer of this corps should adopt a flexible form of command, while preserving its military form. It should not be forgotten that the Amerindians were allies, not subordinates. They could change their minds at any time. It was therefore necessary to employ diplomacy in order to maintain their enthusiasm and respect.

Logistics occupied a very important place in expeditions of this kind, in which the party could rely only on what it had brought in order to

Jean-Baptiste Hertel de Rouville (1668-1722), one of the sons of the tactician François Hertel de La Fresnière. He participated in many expeditions between 1687 and 1709. Anonymous oil from around 1710.

McCord Museum of Canadian History, Montreal.



survive. Since speed was of the essence, only the strict minimum was taken along. Ideally, food, tools, weapons and ammunition were loaded on canoes, and caches were made along the route for the return. The food was not very appetizing but was nourishing: mostly corn and dry peas, dried meat, and hard biscuits. This was occasionally augmented by some game or fish, but all hunting ceased when enemy territory neared. All that remained then to keep spirits and courage high were fortifying shots of brandy. As the party approached the enemy fort, the canoes were hidden and the rest of the journey was made on foot, through the woods, with each man carrying his own pack. If all went well, they arrived within sight of the enemy fort without having been detected.

On winter expeditions, the canoes were replaced by sleds and the men donned snowshoes. They had to be dressed and equipped in the Canadian way, carrying only light, useful arms: guns and hatchets for the officers, petty officers, and soldiers; and hunting guns, hatchets and knives for the Canadian volunteers. Halberds and tricorn hats were not called for!

These general conditions applied as well to the Amerindians participating in the raids. They attacked with extraordinary ardour, sowing terror in their wake, and were matchless scouts. However, it was impossible to bend them to European discipline because "there [was] no subordination among them and their chiefs [had] no right"[58] to command warriors, only to suggest certain courses of action. The Amerindians therefore constituted an independent entity which could not be integrated. In addition, when Amerindians thought they might be defeated, they withdrew rapidly from battle. This was another factor which Canadian tacticians had to take into account.

Le Moyne and Hertel de La Fresnière had a common vision of the art of war as practised in North America. It was given a first positive test in 1686 when the Chevalier de Troyes, assisted by Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville and his brother, Sainte-Hélène, led 30 soldiers of the Compagnies Franches and 70 Canadian militia voyageurs on an extraordinary expedition which first took them to Moose Factory, in what is now Ontario, to dislodge the English from Hudson Bay.

Hudson Bay and its catchment area, constituting an immense territory whose wealth of furs seemed inexhaustible, was conceded in 1670 to the Hudson's Bay Company by the king of England. However, the French Compagnie du Nord claimed the same rights for France. The Le Moyne clan lost little time in wrangling and legal disputes. They attacked the fort, capturing it after scaling the six-metre-high palisade and knocking down the gate with a battering ram. They then went on, capturing Rupert House (now Fort Rupert at the entrance to James Bay) as well as a ship lying at anchor close by. Fort Albany capitulated in July. The forts of Severn and York, to the west, remained in English hands, for the time being. Nevertheless, the French flag now flew over most of the posts on Hudson Bay. The evidence was clear.

Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville.
Musée du Québec.

Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville

Of all the sons of New France, none is more celebrated than Pierre Le Moyne, Sieur d'Iberville, who served in the military (on land but especially at sea), and was an explorer, a colonizer and even a merchant at times. He was born into the influential Le Moyne family and baptized in Montreal on July 20, 1661. Little is known about his youth, except that he apparently received his military and naval training in the Gardes de la Marine, probably in the late 1670s and early 1680s.

He undertook his first campaign in Canada with the Chevalier de Troyes to Hudson Bay in 1686. Young D'Iberville certainly did not lack valour. At Moose Factory, he stormed the fort with his sword in one hand and a pistol in the other. When surrounded, he managed to kill a few Englishmen before being rescued. At Fort Albany, he succeeded in seizing a ship with only 13 men. He returned to Montreal in 1687, and then went to France, before reappearing once again and capturing three ships in Hudson Bay in 1689. Back in Montreal, he took part in the expedition that destroyed Schenectady in February 1690, then set out again for Hudson Bay during the summer to take the little post of New Severn.

During the 1690s, his exploits only increased in number. In addition to cruising off the coast of New England, he recaptured York Factory in 1694 and took Pemaquid and St. John's, Newfoundland two years later. However, his greatest victory came in 1697. Aboard the *Pelican*, a 44-gun frigate, D'Iberville led a small squadron of ships toward Hudson Bay. Having lost contact with the other ships in the fog, he arrived at the mouth of the Hayes River on September 4. The next day, the lookout spied three large vessels on the horizon. Action stations! They were three English warships: the 56-gun *Hampshire*, escorted by the frigates *Dering*, with 36 guns, and *Hudson's Bay*, with 32 guns. There was only one hope for D'Iberville: to attack.

The *Pelican* took on the *Hampshire* first, firing a few broadsides. The great English ship began to heel and then went straight to the bottom. The *Hudson's Bay* was then engaged and suffered the same fate, while the *Dering* turned and fled. However, the *Pelican* had been damaged and sank in turn. Finally, the rest of the French squadron arrived. York Factory was taken and renamed Fort Bourbon. The French press caught wind of all these exploits, and D'Iberville was awarded the Cross of Saint Louis in 1699, thus becoming the first Canadian-born military man to receive this honour.

When peace returned, D'Iberville went to Biloxi Bay and built Fort Maurepas (today Ocean Springs, Mississippi) in March 1699. This was the first permanent settlement in Louisiana. He returned to this colony during the following years, reinforced the new settlements, and founded Fort Saint Louis de la Mobile (today Mobile, Alabama). Numerous Canadians participated in all these expeditions.

In 1702, France and England found themselves at war once again, but D'Iberville, weakened by fever, was convalescing in La Rochelle until early 1706. Then he sailed for the West Indies, leading a fleet of 12 ships. After stopping over in the French islands, he headed for the British island of Nevis, which he captured without difficulty and looted in April 1706.

D'Iberville then headed for Havana to dispose of his booty; however, once in the Cuban capital, his fever returned and he died on July 6, 1706, two weeks short of his forty-fifth birthday. He was buried on July 9 in San Cristobal church. Some claim that his tomb was transferred to the San Ignacio of Havana cathedral in 1741, after the demolition of San Cristobal, but there is no evidence of this, and the final resting place of the first great hero in Canadian military history remains a matter of conjecture.

The tactics of Le Moyne and Hertel de La Fresnière had been proved effective. Only a mixed force of French soldiers and Canadian militiamen could seize so many strongholds with such lightning speed and outstanding success.

Dominance of Raid Warfare

Thereafter the tactics of Canadian warfare would be refined but not fundamentally altered. At the end of the seventeenth century, regular soldiers, accustomed to living in forts, often proved unable to withstand the harsh physical demands of such expeditions as well as Amerindians and Canadian militiamen could. The wars against the Foxes in the west provided them with an opportunity to gradually grow accustomed to this kind of warfare, and the most experienced of them eventually served as cadres for militiamen. The raids also provided training. Often, small groups of eight to ten men – almost always the allied Amerindians – would decide on their own to conduct a few surprise attacks in the frontier regions. These actions added to the pressure maintained on the American colonies. In little more than ten years, the war was thus largely transferred from the settlements of New France to those of New England. This reversal in the situation was due to the tactics developed by the Canadians.

The Compagnies franches de la Marine played a large part in the development of this innovative war strategy, due largely to their practice of recruiting officers from the colony. Because they belonged to these troops and enjoyed a military status and the support this brought, these officers could ponder the problems of waging war in their own

environment and propose solutions to improve the effectiveness of the fighting forces.

Senior authorities recognized the exceptional contributions of Le Moyne and Hertel. The former was given a seigneury and was held in very high esteem for the rest of his days. However, if his family's feats of arms played a large part in his being awarded letters patent of nobility by Louis XIV, the wealth he had accumulated as a merchant certainly was not immaterial to this honour. This was demonstrated by the difficulties encountered by Frontenac in 1689 when he attempted to obtain similar recognition for Hertel de La Fresnière. The French authorities agreed in principle to his ennoblement, but were concerned about whether he had enough wealth to maintain such a rank. Assistance was given in the form of a seigneury granted in 1694, but it was not until 1716 that this exceptional officer, the first genuine tactician in Canadian military history, was fully rewarded for his contributions.

One of the most dismal aspects of the development of these extremely innovative war tactics was the indifference if not outright condemnation with which they met among army officers in France. When they deigned to pay any attention at all, it was to emphasize the lack of discipline of Canadian soldiers and militiamen – in the sense of not acting like "robots" – and to conclude that these sorts of tactics were only suitable for "savages."[59] In the eyes of many Frenchmen, this went without saying because, after all, Canadian officers were nothing but commoners, or people very recently elevated to the nobility. This attitude began to disappear in the mid-eighteenth century when light infantry made its appearance in the German and Austrian armies and – irony of ironies – in the British army in America, in order to counter, with relative success, the tactics of the Canadians.

Treatment of Prisoners

One of the greatest problem of raid warfare was the abominable treatment accorded captives and the people who were vanquished. Throughout the seventeenth century, the French colonists in Canada had themselves lived with the fear of being tortured at the stake. Some who fell into the hands of the Iroquois were roasted for "two or even three full days"[60] before being liberated by death. Exasperated Montrealers finally threatened the Iroquois with the same treatment and burned a few Iroquois prisoners in 1691.

The French authorities attempted with varying degrees of success to humanize the treatment of prisoners brought back from expeditions by attempting to free the latter from their Amerindian allies, especially through purchase. Numerous accounts by people taken prisoner in New England contain dreadful descriptions of the tortures endured, but point out as well the efforts made by officers in New France to obtain their release.

Prosperous-looking bourgeois belonging to one of the two "reserve" militia companies, mobilized in Montreal and Quebec in 1752. Reconstitution by Michel Pétard.
Canadian Parks Service.

Canadian Militiamen

There was no shortage of volunteer militiamen to participate in the expeditions, with Montrealers being particularly enthusiastic. It was said that Montreal's militia was both the best and the most insubordinate of all. There was a real esprit de corps in the various militia companies of the towns and parishes, which just begged to be developed through rivalries. Thus the intrepid Montrealers denigrated Quebec City's militiamen as "sheep," while the latter, believing themselves far more civilized, described the Montrealers as savage "wolves," good for nothing but running around in the woods with Amerindians. These epithets provided indirect evidence of the basic nature of both groups.

Until the end of the seventeenth century, militiamen departing on expeditions received nothing more than food and a few pieces of equipment. They had to supply everything else themselves. For example, all those enrolled by d'Iberville and Sérigny in 1694 for the Hudson Bay expedition were required to supply their own gun, powder horn and clothing, although they could look forward to sharing in any booty or profits. On the whole, these conditions were rather similar to those of privateers! It was likely on the basis of similar agreements that d'Iberville engaged the Canadians who accompanied him to Newfoundland, Louisiana and the West Indies.

The large-scale mobilizations undertaken for campaigns in Iroquois country or in the West did not offer as much promise of booty or profit. Therefore, Governor General Frontenac arranged during the 1690s to provide all militiamen with clothing and equipment. This consisted generally of a capot, a breechcloth, leggings, a blanket, moccasins, a knife and two shirts. The clothing did not constitute a military uniform but was simply Canadian-style civilian wear. Since these men were not paid, this was a relatively economical way of maintaining an effective militia.

Mobilizations were ordered by the governor general, who personally established the number of militiamen that would be needed on each occasion. An appeal was then launched for volunteers from various companies to join the expedition. The colonists who remained behind in each parish cultivated the lands of those who left.

Canadian Voyageurs

Another type of specialized militiamen developed in Canada were the "voyageurs." Not all militiamen took part in attacks; some were needed to man the canoes laden with all the material needed for large expeditions. This task was

"Canadian on snowshoes going to war over the snow," at the end of the seventeenth century. This is the only known contemporary illustration of a Canadian militiaman.

National Archives of Canada (C113193).

extremely arduous, under the conditions of the time, and only Canadian voyageurs, colonists or sons of colonists accustomed from childhood to the rigours of canoeing and life in the woods, were able to accomplish it. Weapons, small cannon, powder, tools, kits for everyone, and sufficient food for hundreds of men over several months were all transported by canoe. All this had to be backpacked over the numerous portages that dotted the routes – a monumental logistical feat and human exploit that had to be repeated time after time.

This type of service was essential not only to military operations but also to the expansion of New France. Without the voyageurs, for whom no river was too difficult and no expanse too great, the great voyages of discovery that established French sovereignty over vast tracts of the North American continent would not have been possible.

Among these explorations were those accomplished over a 15-year period by Pierre Gaultier de La Vérendrye, an obscure Canadian officer of few means, despite his brilliant service, and his sons, who were the first to reach the Rocky Mountains.

Militia Weapons

No firearms were handed out to militiamen because they were expected to have their own. However, governors never ceased complaining that the *habitants* lacked them. By 1684, militiamen were being loaned muskets. Some 60 years later, in 1747, according to a report of the intendant and governor general, little had changed: about a third of militiamen did not have muskets. This seems rather curious, in view of the fact that Canadians had a reputation for being excellent shots. Had not the Scandinavian man of science, Pehr Kalm, noted when visiting Canada in 1749 that "all the people born in Canada [were] the best marksmen in existence and rarely miss[ed]"? He further noted that "there [was] not one of them who [was] unable to shoot remarkably well and [did] not possess a musket."[61]

This apparent contradiction can be explained in two ways. First, militiamen from the cities were certainly less likely to own firearms than those from the countryside. By the eighteenth century, game had become rare around the town of Quebec, for example, so that one out of four or five men eligible for the militia did not have firearms, simply because they had no use for them. Second, Canadians and the authorities were obviously playing a little game of hide and seek. Muskets were expensive. In order to obtain a new one without having to spend a lot of money, one could hide the old one or present himself for service armed with a musket so bad that the authorities were obliged to provide another. The authorities showed a certain complicity in this regard. They knew that many men did not have firearms because they had traded them for furs, a practice that was roundly condemned. However, apart from the traditional recriminations of government accountants, the governors general were not unhappy to see this excellent militia armed with new muskets.

The firearm which Canadian militiamen preferred using was the solid and light hunting musket with no bayonet, made at Tulle in central France. It fired 14 mm balls. This calibre was somewhat small for warfare, but that drawback was offset by the shooting accuracy of the Canadians who were very familiar with this weapon. In addition, militiamen carried hatchets and often several knives, one sheathed at the waist, one in the leggings band, and a third hanging on a thong around the neck.

Militiamen in Combat

Canadian militiamen loved ambushes. While their counterparts in New England practised the complicated manoeuvres of European-style battles, they paid no attention to all this. An American militiaman held prisoner in Quebec commented that he had never seen militiamen "so ignorant of military ways."[62] They did not even know whether one placed his musket on the right or left shoulder. The Canadians, of course, had never received training of this kind. They found European-style battles needlessly dangerous, and fought well "only in entrenchments,"[63] according to Governor General Vaudreuil. In an attack, they came out of nowhere, fired a volley at their enemies and charged them, hatchets in hand and uttering war-whoops like the Amerindians, cries that served both to signal the charge and "to frighten the enemy who [was] surprised" and overtaken before having time to recover.

Canadian militiamen suffered setbacks on occasion, but this was so rare that, confident in their bravery, they believed themselves virtually invincible. However, the raid warfare that they practised was so strenuous that few men were able to endure it. Sometimes they were so exhausted and hungry when returning from a war party that some would have lain down at the foot of a tree to die if the others had not forced them to continue. "When they come back, they are unrecognizable and need a lot of time to recover,"[64] noted one commentator of the time.

Specialized Militia Companies

In addition to the numerous militia companies operating at the parish level, various special units were also created in the cities and countryside. For instance, a corps of 120 volunteers was formed in the fall of 1687. This company of Canadian cadets, commanded by Vaudreuil, assisted by four "good lieutenants who were sons of the country," served "at the head of Montreal island"[65] to ensure the city's safety in case of enemy movements. The members of this militia received a modest wage. However, the Minister of the Navy did not approve of this practice, and the company was accordingly disbanded the following year.

As the colony developed, the town militias took pride in being "bourgeois militias" – a name that had nothing in common with the kind of social clubs of this name often found in France. In Canada, their military obligations did not change, except that certain aspects of urban service could require more specialized troops. In 1723, a small militia artillery corps was formed in the town of Quebec, the first of its kind in Canada. It consisted of two "brigades" of about 20 young people, both

Canadian militiamen in their winter dress, toward the end of the seventeenth century. Reconstitution by Francis Back.

From *Pour le Christ et le Roi*, published jointly by Libre-Expression and Art Global, Montreal.

bourgeois and habitants, who were trained at the artillery school of the regular troops. Finally, in 1752, Governor General Duquesne had two full-fledged companies of militia artillery formed and trained, one in Montreal and one in Quebec.

Another type of specialized militias were the so-called "reserve companies" established in Montreal and Quebec in 1752. They consisted of "merchants and good bourgeois" and were commanded by "gentlemen who [did] not serve."[66] This type of corps was assigned to sedentary duties such as guarding the main municipal buildings or headquarters, watch duty, and ceremonial escorts. Wherever they existed, these "good bourgeois" militias generally wore colourful dress. Our Canadian elites were no exception, dressed in scarlet uniforms with white cuffs and white waistcoats.

The Shock of the Attack on Lachine

Dramatic events soon forced Canadians to put the new military tactics, which had just proved so effective at a distance with d'Iberville's Hudson Bay exploits, into practice closer to home. Despite the defeat they had

suffered two years earlier at the hands of Denonville, the Iroquois, encouraged by Americans from the colony of New York, began again in 1689 to harass French settlements. This was the context for the attack on Lachine, a small village upstream from Montreal, in August of that year. According to Frontenac, its inhabitants were massacred with "unparalleled and unprecedented horror."[67] Passing into history as "the massacre of Lachine," this event acted as a catalyst for a formidable response.

In 1689, war broke out in Europe among several countries, including England and France. The Iroquois attack could be seen as the action of a people who had become a tool of the neighbouring English colonies to the south. Back in New France on his second mandate, Frontenac gathered his staff. From a strategic point of view, the time had come for a counterattack. The real enemies had to be dealt a blow in their homeland, he said, as quickly as possible, and in a way that would place them on the defensive.

1690: A Key Year

The French General Staff at Quebec approved the views of Hertel and other Canadians on the tactics that should be adopted: attack the English colonies by land, in winter and through the woods, "in the Canadian fashion." Frontenac ordered that an attack be mounted simultaneously and as quickly as possible from the three cities of Montreal, Trois-Rivières and Quebec. Three mixed expeditionary corps composed of Canadian officers, some soldiers, some volunteer militiamen and Amerindian allies, prepared for imminent departure.

The Montreal group commanded by Jacques Le Moyne de Sainte-Hélène and Nicolas d'Ailleboust approached the village of Schenectady, north of Albany, in January 1690. They awaited nightfall before approaching the fortifications. One of the gates was ajar, blocked by the snow. No guards were on duty. The Montrealers entered without making a sound and soon surrounded every house in the village. At a war-cry signal, the attackers

knocked down the doors. The surprise was total and only a few inhabitants succeeded in escaping. Schenectady was razed, although the survivors were spared. They would not be tortured at the hands of the Amerindians.

Two months later, on the night of March 27, the expedition that had left Trois-Rivières commanded by Hertel de La Fresnière himself, attacked the fort and village of Salmon River, near Portsmouth, Massachusetts. Two hours later, nothing remained. About 30 colonists had been killed and 50 taken prisoner. The Massachusetts militia arrived and set off in pursuit of the attackers. However, they were far behind and Hertel took advantage of this to set a trap. A narrow bridge crossed the Wooster River. Lying invisible in the bush, the commander and his men waited for the English to make their way onto the bridge. At a signal, they fired, killing 20 militiamen and sending the rest fleeing for their lives, terrified by the war cries. The expedition then set off to join that of Commander Portneuf, which had left Quebec and was headed for Casco, in the present state of Maine. This third target was taken and razed in May.

The Baron de Saint-Castin, who had come from Acadia with a group of allied Abenakis, joined in the expedition against Casco. Already much interested in Amerindian tactics, he took advantage of the occasion to exchange views with Hertel de La Fresnière on how they were being changed. He took these ideas back to Acadia and soon put them into practice, in what is now Maine, in numerous raids against the Americans.

The American Colonies Attack New France

The damage caused by the Canadian raids in the winter and spring of 1690

Massachusetts troops, around 1690. On the left, a militiaman; in the middle, officers with sword and spontoon. The ensign is carrying a company flag of the Boston Regiment, and the cavalryman is wearing a cuirass and helmet. Reconstitution by David Rickman.
Canadian Department of National Defence.

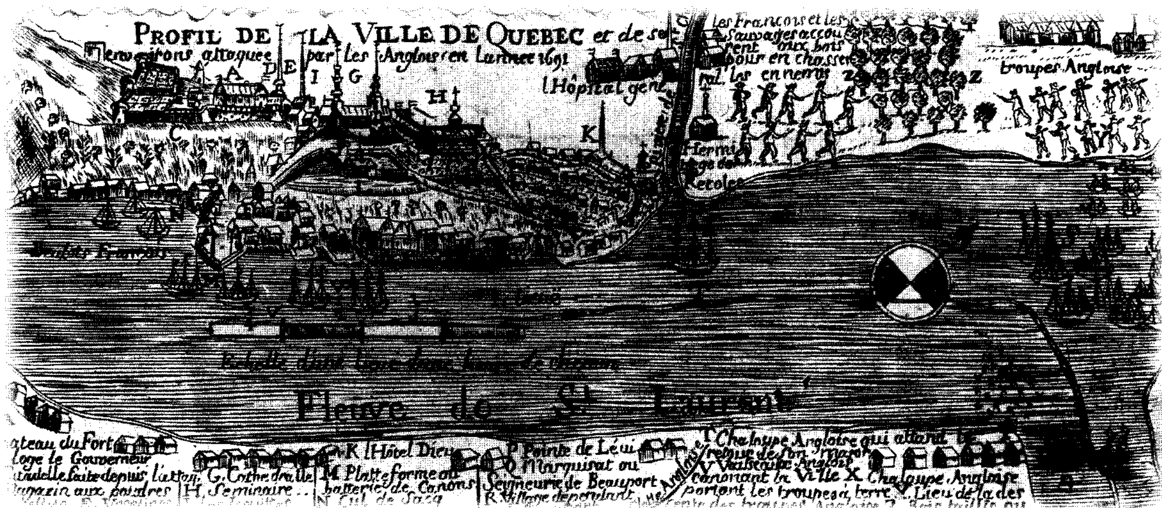
persuaded the colonists in New England to finish off New France once and for all. It was decided in May to invade by land and sea. An army of 1,000 militiamen from the provinces of New York and Connecticut, joined by numerous Iroquois warriors, assembled at Lake Champlain during the summer. However, sickness, quarrels and desertion so decimated their ranks that what remained of the army eventually decided to withdraw. Only a small contingent of militiamen and Iroquois, under the command of Peter Schuyler, pushed ahead to Laprairie, south of Montreal. But they were repulsed by Canadian militiamen and troops.

In the meantime, Massachusetts, which was the leader among the British colonies at the time, was organizing its own attack. This populous, prosperous province possessed a large militia, organized along the same lines as the English militia. Sir William Phips was chosen to lead a naval expedition against Port-Royal in Acadia. An infantry regiment of seven companies, including 446 officers and soldiers, was raised under the command of Major Edmund Willy. It sailed on board Phips' eight ships, and captured Port-Royal without any difficulty. Having left Boston in mid-April, all had returned by the end of May.

Encouraged by this success, the New Englanders decided to attack Quebec. With splendid self-assurance, they raised a fleet and an army on credit, with the debt to be repaid from the booty taken from the enemy. This time Sir William Phips commanded a fleet of 34 ships, with seven battalions of Massachusetts militiamen on board, each 300 to 400 men strong. In all, the expedition consisted of 2,300 men, in addition to an artillery detachment, six field cannons, and about 60 Amerindians to serve as scouts.

Phips at Quebec

The fleet arrived at Quebec, where Frontenac and his troops were waiting, on October 16, 1690. Phips rather presumptuously gave the count an hour to surrender, before he would



"Profile of the town of Quebec and environs under attack by the English in 1691" (sic-1690). This was the attack by the troops from Massachusetts under the leadership of Sir William Phips.
National Archives of Canada (C20796).

attack. Frontenac's hot temper gave rise to one of the most famous phrases in Canadian history: "The only response I have for your general is through the muzzles of my cannons."[68] These words perfectly summarized the feelings of the officers and men, both from the regular troops and the militia.

The Massachusetts battalions landed to the east of the city, marching in a line with their drums beating and their flags flying in the wind – a beautiful sight according to observers from both camps – before being raked over by defenders lying in ambush. In their haste to get back on their ships, the Americans left five of their six artillery pieces on the field. The two sides bombarded each other, and the American flagship was damaged, losing its colours, which fell into the hands of the French. On October 24, the fleet weighed anchor and returned to Boston.

Thus ended the first American attempt to invade Canada. But the story was not over yet in Boston. When the expedition returned without the expected booty, the debt owed by Massachusetts rose to some £50,000 – an enormous sum for the times. The coffers were empty. In order to "calm the clamour of the soldiers and sailors"[69] demanding their pay, the authorities, fearing an armed insurrection, had bills of credit printed for the veterans, while raising taxes considerably. Unfortunately for the veterans, however, the bills lost value quickly and were soon worth only half their face value. These rude awakenings, both military and financial, calmed bellicose spirits, and nothing so ambitious would again be undertaken against Canada without the assistance of regular army and naval forces from the mother country.

A worthy representative of seventeenth-century women in New France, who were neither fragile nor passive, Marie-Madeleine Jarret de Verchères conducted an exemplary defence of Fort Verchères against an Iroquois attack in 1692, just as her mother had done two years earlier. Her sober account of 1699, often romanticized in late nineteenth-century versions, made her a heroine of our history of everyday life. Like most women in the colony, she knew how to handle arms by the time she was 14 years old. Her contemporary, Bacqueville de la Potherie, said of her that no "Canadian or officer [could] shoot more accurately." Marc-Aurèle de Foy Suzor-Côté. Pastel.
Musée du Québec.

The Exhaustion of the Iroquois

In 1691, Major Schuyler set out for Montreal leading a force of 300 men, including New York militiamen and Iroquois. On August 11, he attacked Fort Laprairie without success, although the French suffered substantial losses. While Schuyler withdrew, confident of having nothing more to fear, the French mobilized some 700 soldiers and militiamen and part of this force caught up with the English force. A desperate battle ensued, at

Count Frontenac, still active at the age of 74, is carried in a canoe during the expedition he led against the Iroquois in 1696.
National Archives of Canada (C6430).

the end of which the New Yorkers and their allies retreated, leaving 83 dead, including 17 Amerindians, against only five or six wounded for the French.

The Iroquois subsequently mounted a few small offensives of their own, including the one that gave rise to Madeleine de Verchères' celebrated defensive action in 1692. In response, the French counterattacked the Iroquois in their own territory. In January 1693, an expedition razed several Mohawk villages north of Albany, at a critical time for their nation. The Iroquois began to feel that their allies did not provide much support in difficult times. The Iroquois were willing to mount raids for the English, but the latter in turn would have to attack the French by sea, for it was "impossible to conquer Canada just by land."[70] This demonstrates a perfect understanding of the strategic and tactical problems of invading Canada. The Iroquois also noted that the Amerindian allies of the French had powder and large quantities of arms, while they lacked the former and had little of the latter.

The largest French attack on the Iroquois was mounted in 1696. Under the leadership of Governor Frontenac, who at the age of 74 was carried through the woods in a canoe by bearers, the army of more than 2,000 men went to the heart of Onondaga country, setting fire to their villages and destroying their crops. The

success of this attack, on the heels of the other French victories, led to some rather sad conclusions for the Iroquois: the French had completely mastered the art of attacking sites far from their bases, and the English colonies had done nothing at all to help the Amerindians, even though they were allies. Furthermore, the Treaty of Ryswick in 1697 put an end to the war between England and France. Discouraged and exhausted, the Iroquois negotiated a final peace, which they signed in 1701 as part of a broader agreement with the French concluded with many Amerindian nations around the Great Lakes.

The Treaty of Ryswick lasted only a few years. Several European countries were opposed to the grandson of Louis XIV acceding to the Spanish throne, and when Philippe d'Anjou nevertheless became Felipe V, Great Britain, Austria, Holland and numerous German states declared war on France and Spain. The conflict naturally spread to the colonies.

Drummer of the Compagnies franches de la Marine in New France, between 1716 and 1730. Reconstitution by Michel Pétard.

Canadian Parks Service.

The Failed Invasion of 1711

In Canada, raid warfare continued. The largest raids took place in Massachusetts against Deerfield in 1704 and Haverhill in 1708. Unable to defend themselves adequately against this type of attack, the exasperated American colonists sought and obtained help from the mother country. Canada would be invaded by land and sea. The naval expedition was prepared in England. Admiral Hovenden Walker sailed first to Boston, and then, on the morning of July 30, 1711, weighed anchor for Quebec. The fleet he had assembled included nine warships, two bomb ketches, and 60 other vessels carrying some 7,500 soldiers and 4,500 sailors. In all, there were eight British infantry regiments and two militia regiments from New England. How can Canada possibly resist such a force? was the question asked in Boston with some satisfaction, and in Quebec with considerable disquiet.

But chance often plays a large part in the fortunes of war. On the night of August 22, as the fleet sailed north of Anticosti Island, the weather was bad with visibility reduced to practically nil. Suddenly, the admiral was alerted by highly excited young officers: reefs dead ahead. Too late! The hulls of the eight transport vessels carrying soldiers broke on the reefs of Egg Island. Around two o'clock in the morning, the wind turned, making it possible to save the rest of the fleet. Only at dawn was the extent of the disaster clear: 29 officers and 705 soldiers belonging to four of the eight regiments of regular troops were missing, as well as 35 soldiers' wives.[71] As shaken as his men, Walker decided to return home.

Braid from the king's small livery, eighteenth century. Sheldon Kasman collection, Toronto.
Picture: Canadian Parks Service.

In the meantime, the British general Nicholson had proceeded to Albany to take command of an American army of 2,300 men that was to invade Canada from the south. Although sickness had broken out among the troops, Nicholson was preparing to move up Lake Champlain when news arrived on September 19 of the disaster befalling Walker's fleet. Nicholson, in a rage, allegedly threw his wig on the floor and stamped on it! Calmed by his officers, he ordered a retreat to Albany, where the army was disbanded in October.

In Canada, jubilation reigned. After public prayers of thanksgiving, festivities were given free rein and revellers were everywhere. As a result of the failed invasion of 1711, the church situated in the Place Royale in the lower town of Quebec was renamed Notre-Dame-des-Victoires.

Toward the Creation of an Empire

The garrison was now firmly established in New France, where the armed forces had taken root and dominated the government. The Canadian militia was well organized and a redoutable combat force. The colony's enemies, whether British, American or Amerindian, could not overcome its revolutionary fighting tactics. Military officers in New France could aspire to consolidate their positions by establishing a network of forts from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico, and from the Great Lakes to the great sea in the west, and sweep away all opposition to their grandiose vision.

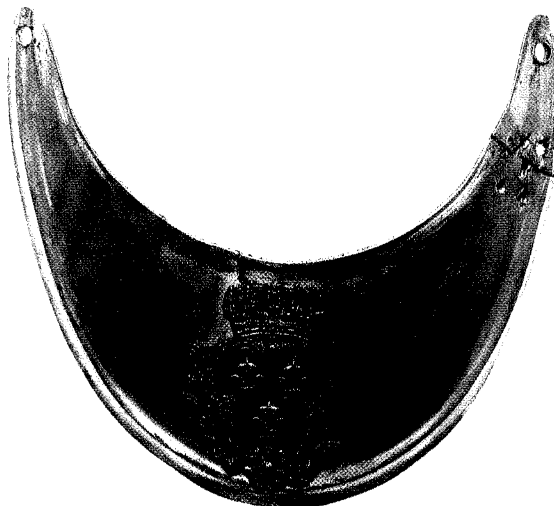
THE ORGANIZATION OF NEW FRANCE

STAFF OFFICERS

The Governor General's Staff

The essentially military character of New France becomes evident upon examination of the way it was organized. For instance, the governor general, who was the supreme military authority in the colony, had a staff organized in nearly the same way as those which existed in French provinces. His closest advisers included the captain of his guards, who also acted as an aide-de-camp, the senior officers of the Compagnies franches de la Marine, and the king's engineer. The intendant was also included with this group of officers because of the repercussions that decisions made in his area of responsibility, the colony's financial administration (which included paying the troops) could have on military matters. The intendant was the only administrative officer that the "officers of the sword" tolerated in their organization.

Officer of the Compagnies franches de la Marine of New France around 1735. After 1732, the officers in Canada officially adopted uniforms. Reconstitution by Michel Pétard.
Canadian Parks Service.

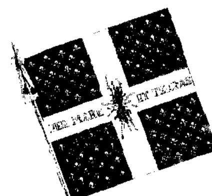


Officer's gorget, around 1750, found in Quebec. A last vestige of medieval armour, this gilded copper throat-piece was worn by officers on duty. Generally plain under Louis XIV, it was sometimes decorated in the centre with a silver badge bearing the royal coat of arms.
Canadian Parks Service.

This group of men made the major decisions on the way war would be waged. It fixed the objectives for attack and defence, determined the tactics to be used, allocated the necessary resources – officers, soldiers and militiamen; supplies and ammunition – and negotiated the important alliances with the Amerindians.

The Garrison Staff

The towns which were administrative centres, such as Quebec City, Montreal and Trois-Rivières in Canada, Louisbourg on Île Royale and New Orleans in Louisiana, each had a governor who was responsible for the civil and military administration. However, since Quebec City was the capital of the whole colony,



the governor general also acted as that town's governor.

Each governor had his own garrison staff, which was composed of several officers responsible for the town's military administration. The garrison itself, however, remained under the direct command of its own officers. The officers

Louis-Philippe de Rigaud, Marquis de Vaudreuil (1691-1763). The eldest son of Governor General Vaudreuil, he distinguished himself as an officer on Navy warships. National Archives of Canada (C10612).

of the garrison staff had some rather unusual titles because of the medieval origin of their functions. They included the king's lieutenant, the town major, and the captain of the gates.

The king's lieutenant did not, of course, report to the king in person! Actually, he was a lieutenant-governor who was primarily concerned with military administration and acted as governor when that official was absent. The position of king's lieutenant was only established in Quebec City in 1692, Montreal in 1697, and Trois-Rivières in 1715.

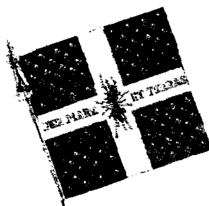
The rank of town major is the oldest in Canada. As early as 1648, Lambert Closse was commissioned to be town major in Montreal, but the authorities waited until 1669 to appoint one in Quebec City, and there was none in Trois-Rivières until 1692. The town major generally saw to the details of military administration, and in particular the lodging of the troops.

The captain of the gates, a function that went back to the Middle Ages when towns were walled, still existed in the garrison staff of Montreal in the middle of the eighteenth century. His role was to ensure that the town gates were well guarded during the day and closed at night.

Those promoted to the garrison staff were usually officers of the Navy troops. This was done to give them access to more influential posts in the military organization or as a reward for their loyal service.

The Staff of the Navy Troops

The staff of the Navy troops always included a surgeon, a chaplain, a clerk to keep the registers, and a drum-major. Although the Compagnies franches de la Marine were independent from each other, their rising numbers eventually required a staff similar to that of a battalion, including a few senior officers. On March 17, 1687, the governor general created the rank of "commandant of the troops in Canada"[72] to which was added that of the major of the troops in 1691. These officers were responsible for parades, discipline and administrative work. After the War of Spanish Succession, this small staff was considered to be less necessary. The rank of commandant was done away with in late 1714, and that of major in May, 1743. The town governors and their garrison staffs then took over these functions.



Navy archer, in about the mid-eighteenth century. Reconstitution by Francis Back.
Fortress Louisbourg. Canadian Parks Service.

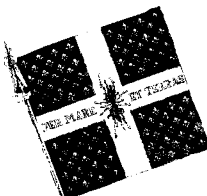
The Police in New France

The "Maréchaussée"

The presence in New France of a "Maréchaussée" and "archers" is often mentioned, usually in relation to the administration of justice. This institution goes back to the Middle Ages, when the king's marshal was responsible for enforcing the law through "provosts" and their archers. These corps became known as Maréchaussées in the fifteenth century. In the beginning, the men comprising them really were archers. As the centuries passed, their arms changed but the name stuck. In France, they were also called "hoquetons" after the name given at the time to the cassocks they wore. By the seventeenth century, Maréchaussée troops could be found in nearly all the towns and provinces of France. The institution also spread overseas, beginning with Canada.

A Maréchaussée was instituted in New France by an edict of Louis XIV, dated May 9, 1677. It consisted of a small band of six archers commanded by a provost, whose headquarters was at Quebec. A few years later, the provost was given an "exempt" or lieutenant to assist him, but the number of archers was reduced to four. Since Montreal was particularly disorderly because of "disturbances caused by brandy," the Marquis de Vaudreuil established a lieutenant and three archers there in 1709. The small Canadian Maréchaussée pursued offenders on foot, by sleigh or by canoe, but was not mounted as in France, although horses could be hired if necessary. Despite frequent requests that its size be increased, the Maréchaussée remained a small force. At most, it was reinforced occasionally by soldiers, although they did not much like this kind of duty.

The Maréchaussée forces in Canada did not have any real uniforms. At first, members wore bandoliers and cassocks, but by the early eighteenth century only the bandoliers remained as a distinctive emblem. They were apparently of blue velvet, embroidered



with fleurs-de-lis and anchors. The provost was entitled to wield a blue baton decorated with gold fleurs-de-lis. The archers were equipped with both firearms and swords. Like soldiers, they were entitled to the half-pay given to retired Navy troops.

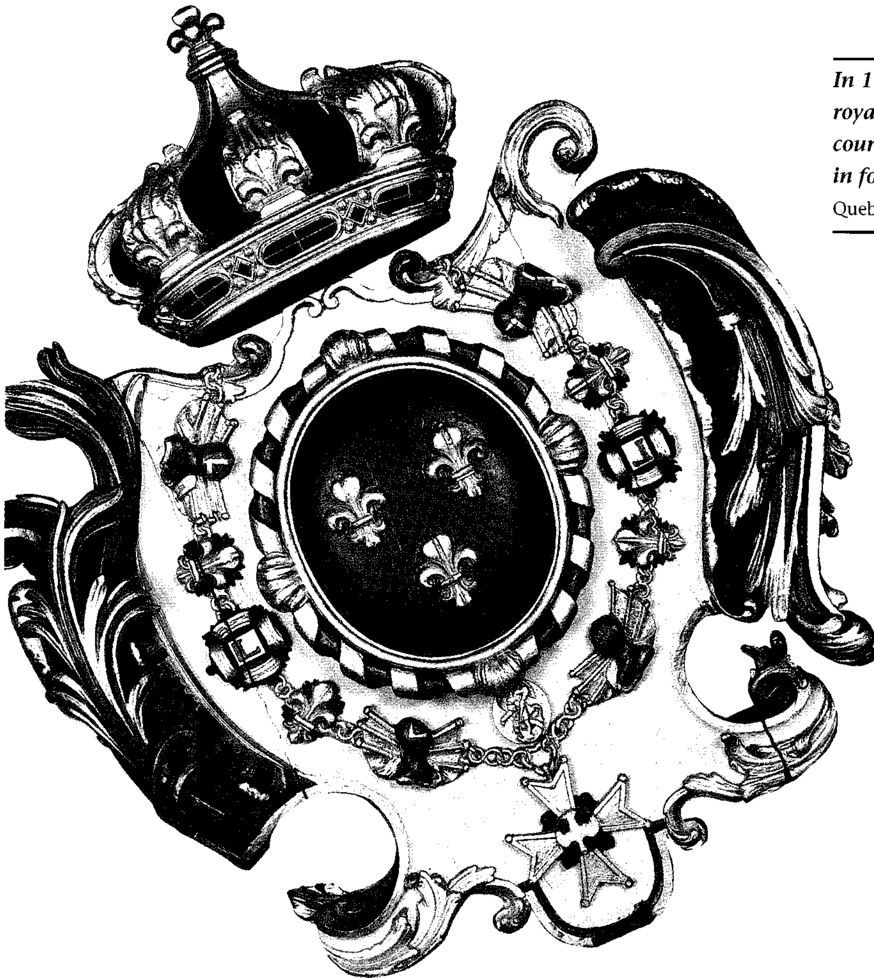
Although the Maréchaussée disappeared with the end of French rule, it was the first police force in Canada. Its range of duties made this humble force the ancestor of today's military police, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and all the various police forces across the country that continue to ensure that laws are obeyed.

Navy Archers

Navy archers, instituted in France at the same time as the office of Navy provost-general, should not be confused with Maréchaussée archers. Navy archers were in the service of intendants, both in France and in the colonies. They formed their escorts and guards during official ceremonies, as intendants were senior administrative officers of the Ministry of the Navy. The archer or archers at their command carried out their orders and arrested people when necessary. Navy commissaries, like the one in Louisbourg, were also assigned Navy archers.

When the first intendant of New France, Jean Talon, arrived in 1665, he was accompanied by two archers. His immediate successors were also entitled to one or two. However, when Intendant Bigot arrived in Quebec in 1748, he had no difficulty increasing their number to three for his personal service and adding a fourth to assist the Navy commissary in Montreal.

Navy archers wore cassocks in the seventeenth century, then blue velvet bandoliers decorated with the royal insignia and anchors. Toward the middle of the eighteenth century, they adopted red and blue uniforms.



In 1725, the governor general of New France had the royal coat of arms emblazoned over the doors and in the courtrooms of many administrative buildings as well as in forts. Sculpture. Pierre-Noël Levasseur.

Quebec City collection, works in storage, Musée du Québec.

The Organization and Number of Troops in New France

The organization of troops in New France varied by colony and period, as well as by whether they were foot soldiers or artillerymen. The following tables indicate the official numbers of troops in the Compagnies franches de la Marine in New France.

In general, all officer positions were actually filled. There was even a group of surplus officers. Discharged in the late 1680s, when seven companies were done away with, they served thereafter in other companies as extra officers. The last of them retired during the 1720s.

The situation among ordinary soldiers was very different. Their actual numbers were almost always lower than the official numbers prescribed by royal order. About 100 places usually went unfilled; it could be slightly more or less depending on the arrival of recruits.

In 1750 there were almost 1,700 soldiers in New France instead of the 1,500 officially required. However, this surplus was exceptional and of short duration. Five years later there were barely 1,300.

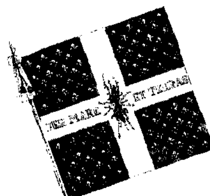
Soldier of the Compagnies franches de la Marine serving on warships in France, around 1750. The uniforms of these troops were virtually identical to those of the Compagnies franches de la Marine in the colonies. Reconstitution by Michel Pétard.

Canadian Parks Service.

Compagnies franches de la Marine in Canada

Year	Companies	Soldiers	Officers
1683	3	150	6
1684	6	300	12
1685	10	500	20
1686	16	800	32
1687	28	1,400	84
1688	35	1,750	105
1689	28	1,400	84
1699	28	840	84
1722	28	812	112
1749	28	1,400	112
1750	30	1,500	120

Insofar as the Compagnies franches de la Marine in Acadia were concerned, the five officers and 40 soldiers on duty in 1691 had been detached from the Canadian companies by Frontenac in order to create a garrison. These troops were reorganized in 1696 to conform to the normal colonial model of each company consisting of a captain, a lieutenant, an ensign, two sergeants, two corporals, two lance-corporals and 44 soldiers, including a drummer. Because of Acadia's isolation, the garrison maintained a relatively strong complement of "184 men, good and bad"[73] in comparison with total permissible strength of 200, according to a report from Governor Brouillan in 1705.



Compagnies franches de la Marine in Acadia

Year	Companies	Soldiers	Officers
1685	1	30	1
1687	1	60	1
1688	1	90	2
1691	–	40	5
1696	2	100	6
1702	4	200	12

The companies in Plaisance, on the other hand, were frequently incomplete. Reports show, for instance, that only nine soldiers were on duty in 1690, the rest having become fishermen or set to work for local inhabitants. Fortunately, new recruits arrived the next year, and the ranks were almost full thereafter. In 1698, 129 soldiers were on duty, whereas there were 150 in 1703, and 144 in 1708. Occasionally, the colonial garrison was reinforced with troops from the motherland. In 1709, four Compagnies franches de la Marine from Rochefort, totalling 200 men, were dispatched to Newfoundland. However, three returned to France the next year. In 1711, two companies from Acadia were transferred to Plaisance after the fall of Port-Royal, increasing the garrison to 250 men.

Compagnies franches de la Marine in Plaisance

Year	Companies	Soldiers	Officers
1687	1	25	1
1691	1	40	1
1693	1	60	1
1694	2	100	6
1696	3	150	9

On Île Royale, the actual number of troops on duty was also always lower than the official number. For example, the garrison was about 50 soldiers short in 1719 and almost 100 short two years later. Thereafter it was generally 20 to 30 men under the maximum number, although this shortfall increased to about 80 in 1731. The shortage was reduced by the arrival of reinforcements, but generally remained at about 30 to 40 men until 1744.

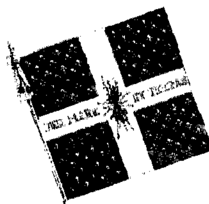
Compagnies franches de la Marine on Île Royale

Year	Companies	Soldiers	Officers
1713	7	350	21
1722	6	300	18
1723	6	360	24
1730	8	480	32
1741	8	560	32
1749	24	1,200	96

Insofar as the artillery companies were concerned, the imposing number of artillery pieces on the Louisbourg fortifications eventually required a corps of specialists in addition to the squad of 16 infantrymen whom a master gunner had been training as gunners since 1735. Therefore, in 1743, Île Royale was given permission to form the first colonial artillery unit in the history of the French army: the Compagnie des canonniers-bombardiers. It comprised only one captain, one lieutenant, two sergeants, two corporals, 12 bombardiers, 13 gunners and one drummer – in other words two officers and 30 men. After 1750, it increased in size to three officers and 50 men.

In Quebec City, the artillery school established in 1698 trained one soldier from each company, in rotation. It was sometimes called an artillery "company," but a real company of canonniers-bombardiers was not formed in the town until 1750. It included four officers and 50 artillerymen. Most of them remained in Quebec City, but detachments were sent to Montreal and various forts.

Recruits for the canonniers-bombardiers were drawn from among the best soldiers in the infantry companies who showed an aptitude for artillery.



King's engineer, wearing the red uniform of his corps, mid-eighteenth century. Reconstitution by Michel Pétard.
Canadian Parks Service.

These men, who served as grenadiers when they were not artillerymen, were better paid and stood in the place of honour during military reviews, on the right of the line. When on parade, they marched before the infantry. Their uniforms were blue and red, and they were entitled to sabres instead of swords. These soldiers may well have worn mustaches as well, like the grenadiers in the home army and the artillerymen of the Navy Bombardiers in France.

Unlike the French troops in the colony, the detachment from Karrer's Swiss Regiment sometimes slightly exceeded its official number of troops. For example, instead of having 150 men at Louisbourg in the autumn of 1743, it had 165. On the eve of the siege of 1745, the detachment was only seven soldiers short.

Karrer's Swiss Regiment Detachment in Louisbourg

Year	Soldiers	Officers
1722	49	1
1724	98	2
1741-45	147	3
1747-49	29	1

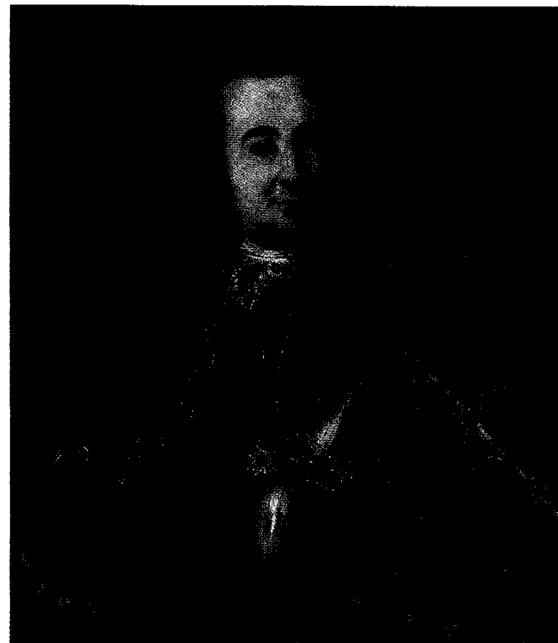
Karrer's Swiss Regiment Detachment in Quebec City

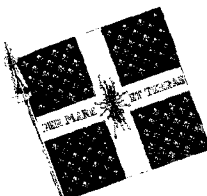
Year	Soldiers	Officer
1747-49	29	1

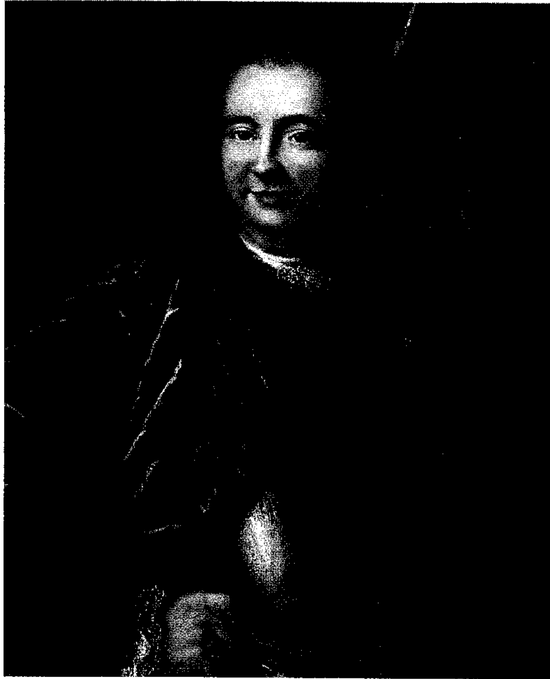
THE KING'S ENGINEERS AND MILITARY AND CIVIL CONSTRUCTION

Although engineers had worked in Canada during much of the seventeenth century (such as Jean Bourdon who was active in Quebec City from 1634-1668), it was not until the 1680s that the position of engineer was permanently established and the general staff was expanded to include a "king's engineer." Those named to this position held commissions as captains in the Navy troops. With the arrival of the first king's engineer, Robert

Presumed portrait of Gaspard Chaussegros de Léry (1682-1756). This military engineer arrived at Quebec in 1716 and had a considerable influence on its architectural heritage.
Musée du Québec.







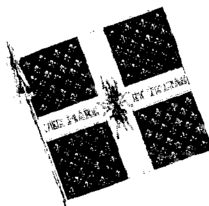
Presumed portrait of Gaspard-Joseph Chaussegros de Léry (1721-1797). Son of Gaspard Chaussegros de Léry, he followed in his father's footsteps, becoming an engineer, and also took part in many military campaigns and reconnaissance missions. Anonymous oil. Musée du Québec.

de Villeneuve, in 1685, the era of military engineering really began in Canada. Villeneuve was followed by Jacques Levasseur de Nérée in 1693 and by Gaspard Chaussegros de Léry, who served from 1716 until his death in 1756. The latter wrote an eight-volume treatise on fortifications, though it was never published. He drew up the plans for the outer stone wall of Montreal's fortifications, as well as plans for Fort Niagara in 1726 and Fort Saint-Frédéric in 1737. In addition, he supervised work on Quebec's fortifications. The king's engineers were also called upon to construct civilian buildings, thereby becoming *de facto* architects. For example, Chaussegros de Léry designed several churches, the episcopal palace and the facade of the Quebec cathedral, two naval shipyards in Quebec City, and even some windmills! In 1712, the king's engineer in Quebec City was assigned two junior engineers.

Some officers worked as engineers without having the official title. This was true, for instance, of Josué Berthelot de Beaucours, a lieutenant in the Compagnies franches de la Marine who arrived in Canada in 1687 and put his knowledge of fortifications into practice. In particular, he oversaw the construction of Fort Chambly in 1710. Finally, he was named king's engineer on Île Royale in 1715.

Engineers were appointed to Louisbourg because of the extensive fortifications built there. One of them, Jean-François du Verger de Verville, a man of some reputation, drew up the plans for the fortifications and supervised the first phases of construction beginning in 1721. His work was continued by Étienne Verrier from 1725 to 1745. In 1750, an experienced engineer, Louis Franquet, was sent to Louisbourg to inspect the fortifications. He remained in New France to inspect others on Île Saint-Jean and in Canada. He was promoted to colonel in 1751 and three years later to brigadier (the equivalent of a modern brigadier-general) and director of fortifications in New France. He was thus the highest ranking engineering officer in North America. He devoted most of his attention to his duties as engineer-in-chief at Louisbourg, since Canada and Louisiana had their own engineers and assistant engineers.

The king's engineers in the colonies were less affected than their counterparts in France by the reorganization of their



corps after 1743. Thereafter, they were assigned to the Ministry of the Navy, but their duties remained similar and they even continued to wear the same scarlet uniform.

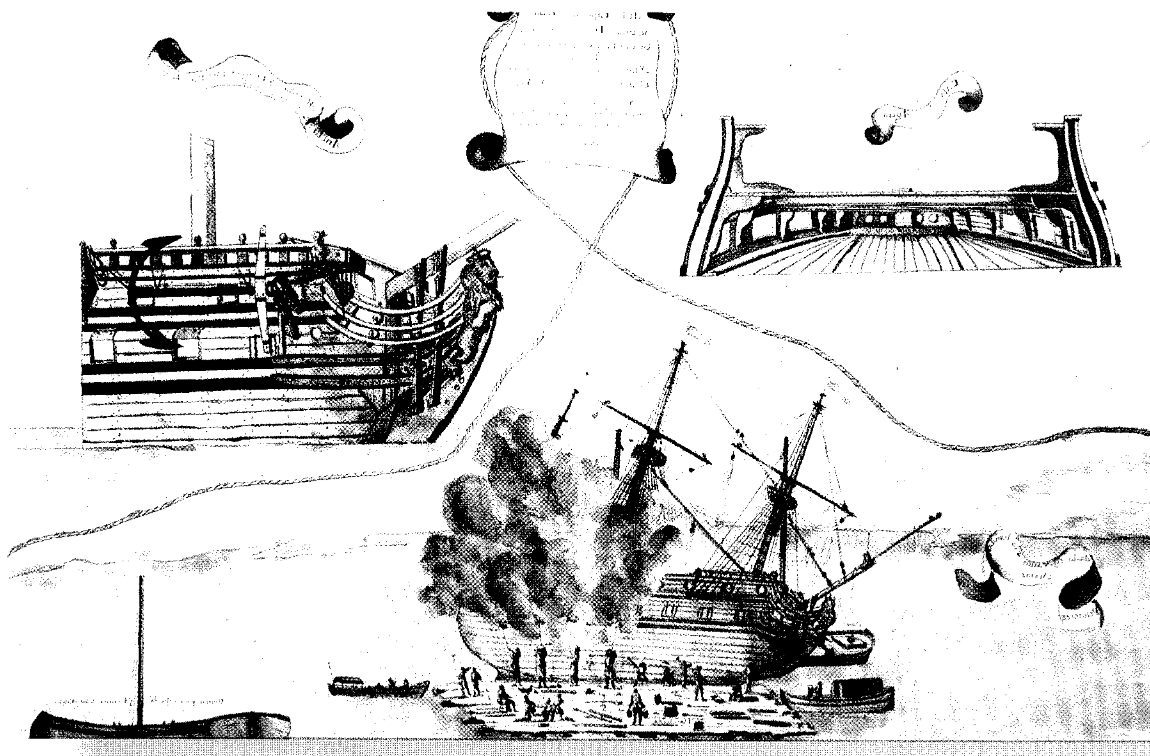
Engineering and Naval Construction

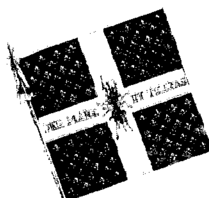
A remarkable naval tradition developed in New France. Small ships were built in Quebec City as early as the mid-seventeenth century. The ports of Louisbourg and Quebec were equipped to repair warships. Beginning in 1717, the Admiralty gave courses to officers so that they would be able to settle disputes in the area of maritime law.

Since Canada contained many kinds of trees that were becoming scarce in Europe, as well as deposits of iron ore, various plans were developed to construct a shipyard in Quebec City for the royal navy. A plan was finally adopted in 1738, and a yard built the next year for the construction of warships. The Ministry of the Navy first ordered a ship to transport soldiers and equipment, according to plans drawn up by naval engineers in Rochefort. One of them, René-Nicolas Levasseur, was sent to Quebec to supervise the work and take charge of the shipbuilding yard. About ten warships were built. The first of these were the *Canada*, a 500-tonne store ship able to carry 40 cannons and a crew of 120, which was begun on September 22, 1739 and launched on June 4, 1742; the

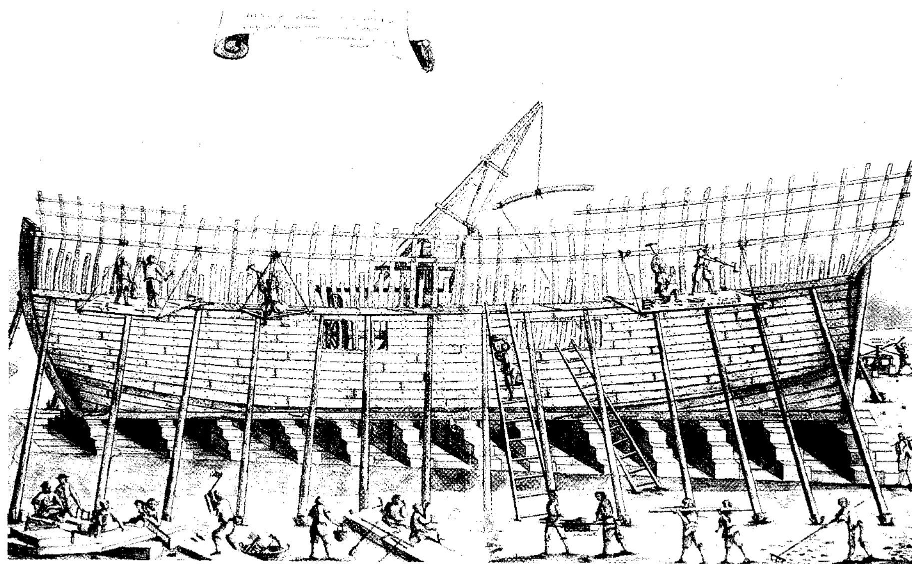
Careening in the mid-eighteenth century. After several months at sea, ships' hulls became encrusted with small mollusks and worms, damaging them and slowing down the ships. Ships then had to be careened. This long and tedious operation, done at the naval yards of Quebec City and Louisbourg, consisted of inclining the ship and "heating" its hull, that is, burning the crust off the planks with torches.

Museo Naval, Madrid.

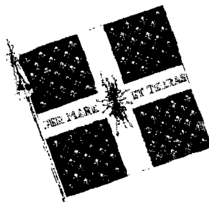


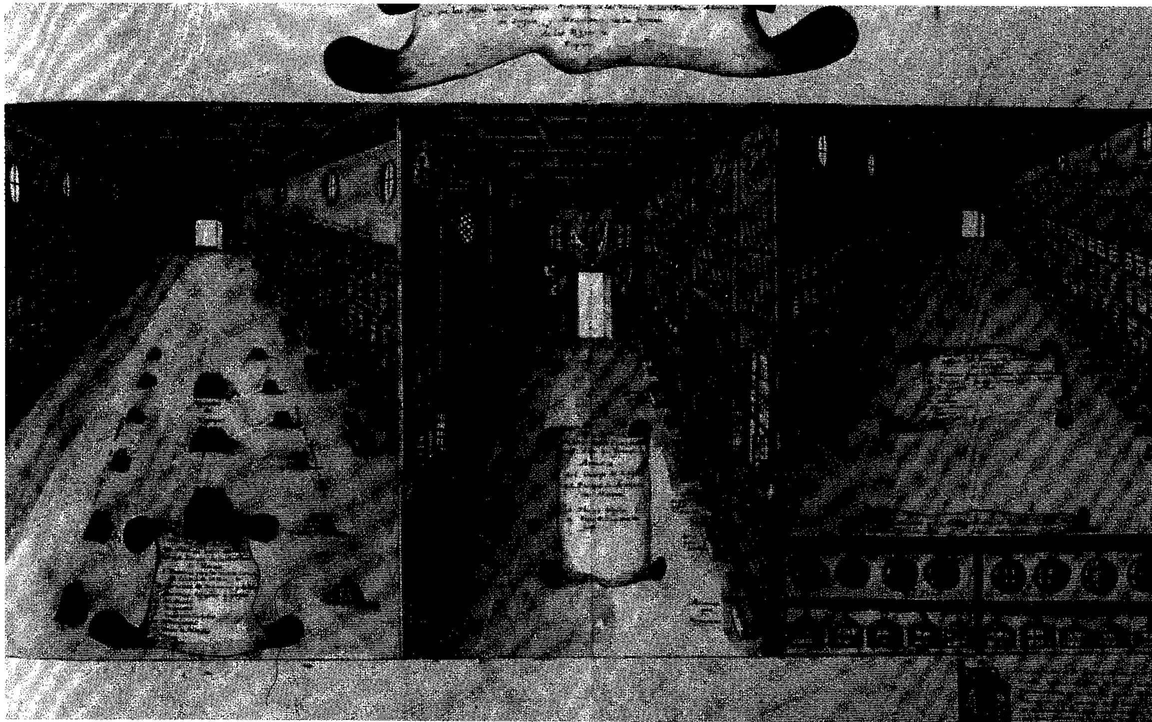


Frigate under construction, around the mid-eighteenth century.
Museo Naval, Madrid.



Caribou, a 700-tonne store ship able to carry up to 45 cannons and 150 crew members, which was started in 1742 and launched on May 13, 1744; the *Castor*, a 26-gun frigate with a crew of 200, begun in July 1744 and launched on May 16, 1745; the *Carcajou*, a 12-gun corvette weighing 70 to 80 tonnes and built in 1744-45. It was the first naval corvette built in Canada and the ancestor, so to speak, of the numerous Royal Canadian Navy corvettes that served so valiantly during the two world wars of our century. The remaining five ships were the *Martre*, a 22-gun frigate laid down in May 1745 and launched on June 6, 1746; the *Saint-Laurent*, a 60-gun vessel weighing 1,100 tons, started on September 1746 and launched on June 13, 1748; the *Orignal*, a 60-gun vessel weighing 1,100 tons, which was laid down in October 1748 but sank when launched on September 2, 1750; the *Algonquin*, a 72-gun ship begun in October 1750 and launched in June 1753; and finally the *Abénaquise*, a 30-gun frigate weighing 946 tonnes, laid down in the summer of 1753 and launched in the spring of 1756.





Interior view of the Navy warehouses, around the mid-eighteenth century.
Museo Naval, Madrid.

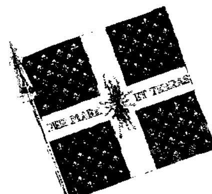
Another 30-gun frigate, the *Quebec,* was begun in 1756 but not completed. During the ensuing Seven Years' War, the Quebec naval yard encountered difficulty, partially as a result of various financial and technical complications, but mostly because of a lack of specialized workers from France. Attempts were made at the Forges du Saint-Maurice to cast cannons for the ships under construction at the Quebec yard, but they failed due to the lack of experience of the master casters in this specialized work. Nevertheless, cannons were sent out from France and ships of the line, veritable "storehouses of cannon balls" with all their artillery, were produced by the royal shipyard in its heyday.

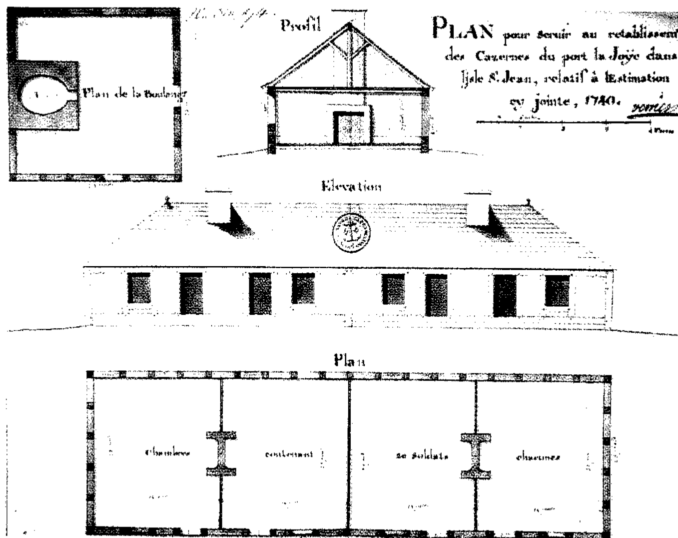
The construction of warships in New France was unusual for both the French and British colonies, because naval construction was almost always undertaken in the mother country. The royal shipyard in Quebec City was therefore remarkable for its era.

Care of Body and Soul

Military medical corps first appeared in France in the eighteenth century. Under the reign of Louis XIV, many military hospitals were built, as well as the celebrated Hôtel des Invalides to house disabled veterans. Physicians and surgeons were hired, first to minister to the sick in hospitals and then to accompany military campaigns. Finally, the mounting number of men under arms and the resultant increasing numbers of sick and injured led to the creation of a separate health service for troops in 1708.

In the Navy, physicians, surgeons and apothecaries were first hired individually. However, in 1689 they formed a permanent corps, with all aspects of their duties, on land and sea, laid down in detail. Religious orders took over





Plan of the soldiers' barracks and bakery at Port la Joye on Île Saint-Jean (today Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island), drawn by the engineer Étienne Verrier in 1740.
Archives nationales de France.

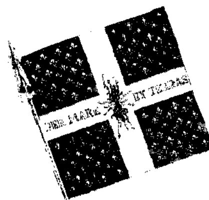
operation of the infirmary services in the naval hospitals.

In New France, as in other colonies, medical specialists were rare. There were only four physicians in Canada during the entire French Regime. Surgeons were more common, but their training was rudimentary. Until 1743, they were joined with barbers in a single occupational guild: that of the barber-surgeons! Surgeons had to be skilled primarily at handling saws and blades. They made incisions, amputated limbs, trepanned, bled patients, and served as pharmacists on occasion. Anesthetics were still unknown, and patients underwent surgery with very little to dull the pain, save some brandy and a piece of leather to gnaw on instead of crying out when the pain became intense. Some people were able to undergo amputations while puffing away on their pipes, but others, overcome by horror, had to be pinned down by their comrades. Surgery patients also faced a high danger of infection because little was known about germs and contagion from dirty instruments. Alcohol was used to limit infection and wounds were cauterized with a red-hot iron.

Since there were so few physicians and surgeons in New France, they cared for both soldiers and civilians and were not an integral part of the armed forces as in France. Although some surgeons accompanied the Carignan-Salières Regiment between 1665 and 1668, it was not until shortly after the arrival of the Navy troops in the 1680s that a permanent structure was established. Beginning in 1686 in Canada, but not until the eighteenth century in Louisbourg, a surgeon-major provided services and in return was paid three *livres* a month per company, a sum that was deducted from the pay of the soldiers. Like the royal physician, this surgeon-major treated both soldiers and sailors.

Hospitals

Wounded or sick soldiers were cared for in the colony hospitals, all founded and maintained by religious orders. In Quebec City, there was the Hôtel-Dieu des Soeurs Hospitalières de la Miséricorde de Jésus; in Montreal, the hospital of the Soeurs Hospitalières de Saint-Joseph; in Trois-Rivières, the Hôpital des Ursulines; and in Louisbourg, the Frères Hospitaliers de Saint-Jean.



These institutions received grants from the king through the Ministry of the Navy, in exchange for which they provided free care, food and medicine to officers, soldiers and sailors. In 1731, nuns obtained the right to keep the clothing of the soldiers who died in hospitals, putting it to good use with their thrifty ways. However, the Ministry of the Navy revoked this privilege "once and for all" ten years later. The care extended in all these facilities is generally considered to have been adequate, in view of the state of medical knowledge at the time.

"Frater Soldiers"

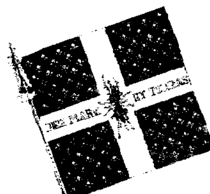
Most surgeons lived in towns. One or two would be attached to the local hospital and paid by the Ministry of the Navy. Sometimes surgeons could be found in large forts, such as Chambly, Saint-Frédéric, Niagara and Detroit. Very occasionally, surgeons would accompany large expeditions, but generally, soldiers posted to remote forts or undertaking raids on New England had to improvise as best they could. In order to compensate for the lack of physicians and surgeons, almost all companies had a "frater" or soldier with some knowledge of first aid for the sick and wounded. This soldier usually served as the barber as well. He knew how to handle surgical lancets – small, very sharp knives used for minor surgery such as extracting bullets. In return for their services, "fraters" received a modest supplement to their pay.

Nevertheless, soldiers wounded on raids were in a perilous position. They were not abandoned, but ran a high risk of dying en route as a result of hemorrhage or exhaustion.

Chaplains

The importance of religion in the lives of the people of this period should not be underestimated. It was absolutely essential to have chaplains for the troops, if only to administer the last sacraments. Even the toughest officers and soldiers could be driven to despair if they became seriously ill or injured far from religious ministrations. In the seventeenth century, the religious needs of soldiers were attended to mostly by Jesuit missionaries and lay priests. However in March 1692, the king designated the Recollects, a minor order of Franciscans which is now defunct, to be "chaplains to [his] troops"[74] in New France. They could be found in garrison towns as well as large forts such

Canadian militiamen, first half of the eighteenth century. Votive offering of Notre-Dame-de-Liesse.
Fabrique de la Rivière Ouelle, Quebec.

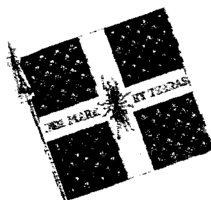


Recollect chaplain. Eighteenth-century engraving.
Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence.

as Detroit or Niagara. In a way, the Recollects formed the first military chaplain corps in Canada. They became very popular in New France and, by the mid-eighteenth century, three-quarters of their priests in the colony were born in Canada. Sworn to poverty, they subsisted on small royal grants and alms. They were fed and lodged for free wherever they offered their services. They dressed in rough homespun cassocks, wore wooden sandals in the summer, and "affected great poverty, their crosses made simply of wood."[75]

Chaplains recited the daily prayers and said Mass on Sunday mornings and holidays. Some soldiers and doubtless all cadets were required to study the catechism. Vespers were said on Sunday afternoons. Chaplains also heard confessions and administered the last rites to dying soldiers, when surgeons called on their services.

At a time when religious observances were considered not only important but mandatory, regardless of one's depth of conviction, ceremonies were held before battles to maintain the morale of the troops. If the battle was relatively conventional, such as a siege for example, the chaplain would pronounce a short but powerful exhortation and give a general benediction, before retiring to the infirmary to comfort the wounded and administer the last rites to the dying. Military chaplains accompanied the troops on some expeditions as well.



DAILY LIFE IN NEW FRANCE

SOLDIERS

Where Did They Come From?

Professional soldiers were generally not recruited in the colonies. The rare attempts made in Canada were total failures. The habitants were simply not interested in military life. Navy troops were raised in France, and those destined to serve overseas joined the colonial companies. From 1683 until 1755, some 7,800 soldiers and recruits were sent to Canada in this way. This figure may seem surprisingly high, but it covers nearly three-quarters of a century. In any case, it is just an estimate because no precise figures have been preserved. The men arrived in waves: more than 2,000 disembarked between 1683 and 1689, and about 1,300 in 1750 and 1751. Few new recruits arrived between these spurts, however, and in some years there were none at all.

Soldiers were recruited for service overseas in approximately the same way as for service in the other corps of the French army, except that officers and petty officers from the colonies did not participate in the recruitment process in France. This was usually done by professional recruiters, who were officers and sergeants from the home forces. Their main hunting grounds were the city of Paris and the regions surrounding the great naval ports, especially Rochefort, La Rochelle and Brest. Basically they sought young men at least 16 years old and 1.65 m tall, in good health with robust constitutions.[76] The most desirable candidates were those who had learned a craft. The men were enlisted for six years, although little was said of this during the preliminaries. In reality, recruits signed up for unlimited periods.

Soldier of the Compagnies franches de la Marine of Canada, between 1701 and 1716. He is in the "Blow into the pan" position, according to the Navy troops' weapon-handling exercises of 1704. Reconstitution by Michel Pétard.

Canadian Parks Service.

Recruiting Sergeants

Skillful recruiting sergeants generally lingered in taverns, dressed in fine uniforms, lying in wait for young men with a yen for money and excitement. Despite any suspicions the young men had, what a temptation it must have been to seek adventure in the service of the king, to shower themselves with gold and silver in the colonies, to return as wealthy men to their villages, and to recount all their exotic adventures! The recruiter himself had evidently done all this and was comfortably off, enjoying himself,

Soldier of the Compagnies franches de la Marine in New France, around 1740. Reconstitution by Michel Pétard.

Canadian Parks Service.

and able to buy generous quantities of drink. And then of course there were native girls, who were so accommodating, and rich Creoles who just loved handsome young soldiers! Fortunes could be made in Canada, trading trinkets for furs, with no need to fear the deadly fevers of the tropics. There were the Iroquois, of course, but they fled at the mere sight of approaching royal soldiers, leaving their cabins to be burned down at leisure. As for the English, they just sat around in their towns drinking beer. Good wine and frequently pâté were the fare of royal soldiers. Leave was easily obtained upon request. Then, of course, there were recruitment bonuses, payable immediately. After a few drinks, and by now a little tipsy, the young men would be induced to sign enlistment contracts (or scrawl their X's). They received their bonuses on the spot, and then might buy a round of drinks to celebrate their good fortune.

This type of scene, worthy of Voltaire's *Candide,* was nevertheless the classic way that recruiting sergeants operated. Recruiting posters of the time made all sorts of appealing promises. One poster informed potential recruits for Grassin's Volunteers that "while waiting to become officers, they [would] serve under pleasing conditions," adding that they would enjoy the same weapons and dance instructors as the officer cadets. If, by some mischance, military service did not appeal to the new recruits, the colonel would take "real pleasure in finding them employment elsewhere." According to another poster, nothing was more agreeable than life in the artillery. "There are dances three times a week . . . ," it read, "and the rest of the time is spent bowling, playing prisoners' base and fencing. Pleasure reigns. . . ."[77] Young men were even recruited for fictitious regiments with prestigious names. While some naive young people may have been duped by all these promises, most suspected that the life was not quite as rosy as portrayed. Nevertheless, it was hard to resist all that adventure. As one poster for the Navy troops stated, recruits would "see a lot of country."[78]

Not all of the king's soldiers signed up in inns. Some were young men from good families, whose parents wanted them to vanish because of some indiscretion or misdeed. They were not necessarily all that depraved, according to a certain Sieur Le Beau who, in 1729, was surprised to discover a former school chum among a contingent being shipped to Canada. During the 1730s, some habitual criminals were exiled in this way, but the authorities in New France complained about this practice, and it was abandoned. During wartime, some rather unscrupulous recruiting sergeants resorted

to force, and their recruits did not always meet the basic requirements. According to contemporary reports, contingents occasionally included children, old men and disabled people. Some professional recruiters were not in the military themselves and were simply employed on commission. In 1751, the Navy hired a certain Sieur de Gignoux for this purpose instead of employing the usual sergeant or officer. Although recruiters certainly went too far on occasion, some new soldiers simply saw military service as their only means of subsistence. This was true, for instance, of a young orphan in the army in Louisbourg, who refused to be discharged for ill health and "began to weep, saying that if he was discharged he would not know what to do for a living."[79]

The Trip to the Recruit Depot

The next day the new recruits awoke to find themselves in the Navy, joining their fellows to be sent off to La Rochelle or Rochefort under the surveillance of an officer. Often, one or two Maréchaussée archers would escort the group, in case any recruits changed their minds. From the La Rochelle, the fledgling soldiers were shipped to the fortress on Île de Ré, which served as the assembly point for most of the colonial troops, or went to the Île d'Oléron, farther south. Before the 1730s, the recruits often did not know to which colony they would be sent. In 1684, for example, soldiers destined for Canada boarded ships "not knowing the place to which" they were headed. While the recruits awaited the day of their departure, they learned the basic skills of military life. By this time, more than a few had thought of desertion, but chances were slim of escaping from an island fortress off the coast of France.

During the crossing, it was not unusual for epidemics to break out on board, killing some of the recruits. Although Navy physicians knew nothing about bacteria and germs, they had made the connection between poor hygiene and contagious disease. Because the recruits often arrived in dirty clothing, before their departure "the custom [was] to give the recruits"[80] a woollen jacket (which was replaced in 1717 by a grey-white linen smock with 18 brass buttons), a pair of grey linen knee-breeches, a pair of socks, a pair of shoes, one or two shirts, a woollen hat, a comb, a blanket and a hammock. Epidemics still broke out on board ships, but these measures certainly reduced the risk.

J.C.B. Goes to Canada

The initals "J.C.B." are those of an ordinary soldier who wrote the only known memoirs describing the life of recruits in the companies dispatched to Canada. His description of his recruitment and initiation into military life is therefore especially valuable. J.C.B.'s adventures began when he took the road for La Rochelle in order to go to work for his uncle. On the way, he made friends with an officer leading a group of colonial recruits. Upon arrival in La Rochelle, J.C.B. learned that his uncle had died, which meant that he was stranded there, penniless. His new friend came to the rescue by finding him an office job in the fortress of Saint-Martin-de-Ré. Here J.C.B. met various sailors and soldiers who recounted tales of their adventures in distant lands. What an interesting life this seemed to be in comparison with his dreary work as a clerk! Two months later, at the age of 18, J.C.B. was so smitten by the idea of travel that he signed up for the colonial forces and obtained permission to go to Canada, because sailors had said that the climate was "healthier" there.

With 300 other recruits, he embarked on the *Chariot Royal*, a frigate armed as a cargo ship with only half its complement

Soldier of the canonniers-bombardiers between 1750 and 1760. This is how "J.C.B." and his comrades were expected to look for guard duty or military reviews. Reconstitution by Eugène Lelièpvre.
Canadian Parks Service.

of guns, which set sail on June 17, 1751. But the crossing was very long and difficult. A severe storm raged for five days, leaving J.C.B. "very nauseous." It must have been terrifying for him and many other recruits who had never had any experience of the sea. Finally the frigate arrived within sight of Quebec City, and on November 5, 1751, J.C.B. set foot on dry land for the first time in more than four months.

A few days later, the recruits assembled in two lines on the parade grounds in Quebec City facing three lines of troops under arms. Around noon, the governor general, accompanied by the general staff, inspected the troops and then inducted the new recruits into the Compagnies franches de la Marine and an artillery company, which were each entitled to a certain number of fresh recruits. First choice was given to the artillery, which was considered to be an elite company. It selected J.C.B. Then the infantry companies made their choices, one after the other, in order of the length of service of their captains. The next day, J.C.B. received his uniform and weapons and was lodged in the guardhouse above the Saint-Jean gate in Quebec City.

Nicknames

J.C.B. then received his *nom de guerre*, Jolicoeur, a small detail that enabled him to be identified as Joseph-Charles Bonin, known as Jolicoeur, a gunner in the Compagnie des canonniers-bombardiers of Canada.[81] The use of nicknames was widespread at the time, quite frequent among civilians in the lower classes and almost universal among French soldiers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Since it was not uncommon for these monikers to totally supplant soldiers' names, they were recorded in the official rolls after 1716 alongside the actual first names and surnames. This tended to further entrench the use of these nicknames.

The variety and frequent double meanings of nicknames make it almost impossible to categorize them systematically. In general, however, there were six main types, all referring to personal characteristics of the soldier to whom they referred. Sometimes "Saint" was simply added to the soldiers' surnames or first names, or possibly to those of their mothers. For instance the soldier "Jacques Vadeau" became "Saint-Jacques." Nicknames referring to regions of origin were also common, for instance Champagne, Poitevin and Picard referred to French provinces. They could also indicate particular trades, for instance "Lacouture" ("Needlework"), "Boulanger" ("Baker") or "La Flamme" ("Flame") for someone who had a cookhouse. Other nicknames alluded to soldiers' past military experience, such as "Carignan." Nicknames referring to plants were very fashionable, such as "Laframboise" ("Raspberry"), "Lafleur" ("Flower"), "Larose" ("Rose"), or "Latulippe" ("Tulip"). Finally, some nicknames were

based on personal characteristics. Some were physical such as "Blondin" ("Blond"), "Le Borgne" ("One-eye"), or "Lajeunesse" ("Youth"), but more frequently they referred to personality such as "Léveillé" ("Lively"), "Vadeboncoeur" ("Goes-with-good-heart"), and "Brind'amour" ("Bit-of-love"). They bear witness to the joie de vivre and the gallantry of some of these men. Their more warlike traits found expression in such names as "Tranchemontagne" ("Slice-mountain"), "Frappe-d'abord" ("Strike-first") and "Vaillant" ("Valiant"). Many French Canadian surnames of today were once the nicknames of discharged soldiers who remained in Canada.

Drummer of the Compagnies franches de la Marine of Canada, between 1701 and 1716. Reconstitution by Michel Pétard.

Canadian Parks Service.

To the Sound of the Drummer's Beat

Military music now survives largely as entertainment, and we have completely forgotten that the life of garrison towns used to be regulated by the drummer's beat from morning till night. Rattling drums, set off by the high-pitched sound of the fife, formed the familiar backdrop of daily life, somewhat like pealing church bells in another era.

In the first half of the seventeenth century, the garrison regulations for European fortresses were adopted in the colonies. Montreal, Quebec, Trois-Rivières and Louisbourg were fortified towns

Drummer of the Compagnies franches de la Marine in New France, around 1740. Reconstitution by Michel Pétard.

Canadian Parks Service.

governed by general staffs. The *Relations des Jésuites* of 1636 reported that Quebec City operated much like a fortress in France. "*La Diane* awakens us every morning," it said. This was the name given to the first drum roll of the day, (called the "reveille" in English) when the drummer on duty with the guard played from the ramparts for about 15 minutes just as the day dawned. The reasons why this drum roll was called *La Diane* in French are not known. It summoned the garrison and the general population to arise and begin the day's activities. Similarly, *La Retraite* (the "tattoo" in English) was sounded as the sun set to warn the local people that the city gates were about to close for the night. The drummer then sounded *L'Ordre* to announce that they had been closed.

The day was punctuated with numerous other drum rolls as well. *L'Assemblée* was one of those often heard within the town walls, summoning soldiers to join their corps for exercises or inspections on the parade grounds.

La Garde meant that enemy forces had been sighted. Less alarming but still very useful was *Le Ban*, announcing to the public the reading of rules and regulations or perhaps even an auction sale after a death. Drummers also accompanied celebrations. For instance, drums were heard during the festivities organized in Quebec City on October 29, 1690 when captured English flags were carried to the church.

Although drums were the official instrument of the army, all this should not make us forget that other instruments were played as well. Records after 1660 mention soldiers playing drums and flutes on the day of Epiphany. Like their counterparts in the motherland, soldiers in New France played the fife and occasionally the oboe as well.

Soldiers' Daily Lives

It is difficult to reconstruct the daily schedules of soldiers in New France. Few details were recorded and, in any case, soldiers' schedules varied considerably depending on whether they were in a town or a fort, or lived with civilians or in barracks. It also made a difference whether it was summer or winter.

In general, drummers sounded reveille as soon as the sun began to rise above the horizon. Regardless of which fort or barracks they were in, soldiers got up, put on their uniforms, cleaned their rooms, and prepared breakfast, which was eaten in groups of seven. It was still early, around seven o'clock, when sergeants came by to inspect the men and their rooms and to give the orders of the day.

The soldiers then dispersed all across the town. Those ordered to stand guard went to their appointed places and could be seen slowly scaling the ramparts. Others were posted to guardhouses at each of the residences requiring surveillance. In Montreal for example, soldiers served as sentries at the gates of the city governor's residence, while in Quebec City, soldiers guarded the gates of the governor general's residence, accompanied by a drummer because protocol required a drum roll each time he entered or departed, like a marshal in France. Sentries were also required to guard the gates of the intendant, the commissaire-ordonnateur or chief civil official, and the treasurer. Meanwhile, on the parade ground, soldiers drilled under a sergeant. Here and there, squads guarded prisoners or watched over shipyards and military hospitals. Some soldiers were also required to assist in law enforcement. They could be seen accompanying a Maréchaussée archer on his way to arrest a criminal.

Guard duty lasted 24 consecutive hours, from noon till noon, and every soldier put in one full day a week, as well as the times when comrades asked to be replaced. While on guard duty, soldiers served as sentries for periods of four to six hours. In summer they were relieved every two hours and in winter every hour, because of the cold. While not actually standing sentry, soldiers on duty were required to be in the guardhouse. Here they rested, ate, and slept fully clothed, since they had always to be at the ready.

Drills were supposed to be conducted three or four times a week, but officers tended to neglect them, probably because they were of little use for the kind of war waged in Canada. In the mid-eighteenth century, however, the authorities began insisting that army practices in France should be copied exactly. As a result, the regulations on drills and parades were enforced more rigidly.

The time not spent on exercises or standing guard was free. Most soldiers worked for private individuals or on public works, or practised some trade of their own. In this way they earned additional income, which was most welcome in view of their meagre wages.

Lunch was eaten around noon and supper between 5:00 and 7:00 p.m., although this could vary. At 8:00 p.m. in winter and 9:00 p.m. in summer, drummers marched through the city sounding the tattoo at about the time the sun set. At this signal, soldiers had to return to their quarters, some to the barracks and others to the homes of private individuals. Thus the day ended. A soldier's life may seem utterly monotonous, but this overlooks all the amusements they managed to devise.

Soldiers' Wages

The word soldier is derived for the French word for wages: *solde*. This neatly summarizes the importance of remuneration to these men. However, the wages they received were small and the deductions many, including those for food and lodging. An examination of the wages received by soldiers of the Compagnies franches de la Marine from 1680 to 1750 turns up several interesting facts. First, the wage of nine *livres* a month or 108 livres a year, before deductions, remained unchanged over this entire period of 70 years![82] In comparison, civilian day labourers in about 1740 could earn approximately 360 livres a year; a foreman 700 livres; and a blacksmith 1,000 livres in the Forges du Saint-Maurice.[83] Furthermore, before soldiers could purchase anything with their 108 livres, substantial deductions were made for clothing, the general staff, rations and the fund for soldiers no longer fit for service. In the end, barely 15 livres a year were left.

What could be bought around 1700 with this amount of money? A nice coat with a waistcoat cost between 60 and 120 livres; a dressing gown, 30 livres; a pair of slippers, 2 livres; a pair of silk stockings, 12 livres; a good hunting rifle, 50 livres; a storybook, 20 livres; a brush and comb set, 8 livres. And this doesn't take furniture or housing into consideration! Soldiers were actually paid only once every three months during company inspection by the general staff. Only those soldiers who were present received their wages, while the wages of soldiers in hospital or serving in various posts were kept by the treasurer until they returned.

Gunner of a canonnier-bombardier company in New France, between 1743 and 1750. Reconstitution by Michel Pétard.

Canadian Parks Service.

Working to Supplement Income

Even if soldiers were housed, fed and provided with a certain "pension plan," 15 livres a year did not go very far. Canonniers-bombardiers received a supplement of 24 livres, but even this did not suffice. Soldiers attempted, therefore, to earn second incomes. The least

educated became labourers working on the fortifications or in the employ of private individuals. Those who knew a trade practised it, such as the soldier-tailor who was active in Detroit in the mid-eighteenth century. The best-educated soldiers, such as the canonnier-bombardier Joseph-Charles Bonin, found work with merchants keeping their books. According to the Scandinavian traveller Pehr Kalm, in this way soldiers could earn as much as one and a half livres a day in Canada. This increased their incomes considerably! However, in order to work outside their hours of military service, soldiers had to obtain their captains' permission. Captains were usually quite willing to comply, if possible, though in return for the right to keep the soldiers' wages. The soldiers so treated did not complain, because they could earn five or six times as much in their free time.

In the western posts, soldiers were allowed to trade a little with the Indians. In this way, they could return to Montreal with furs worth about 100 livres. Those who were thrifty could therefore afford small luxuries, though others went into debt in the trading posts out west and returned home owing large sums.

Soldiers in Plaisance and Acadia also engaged in other lines of work, some becoming occasional fishermen. However, conditions worsened after the colony of Île Royale was established in 1713. Since there were no labourers available to work on the fortifications, soldiers performed this task, thus augmenting their meagre wages. However, supplies were very expensive in Louisbourg, where company captains controlled the canteens and acted also as lenders. Soldiers were almost forced to go into debt in order to survive. During the 1730s, officers even managed to have their soldiers' pay turned over to them first so that they could make their deductions. Soldiers on Île Royale thus found themselves in an economic bind, with no other sources of supply in such an isolated area.

Promotion

Awarding braids, badges and medals has a well-known positive effect on pride and morale. However, such honours were not widely distributed until recently. Prior to the 1760s, soldiers wore nothing on their uniforms to show how long they had served or their valour in combat. The awarding of medals basically dates from the nineteenth century, when it became the custom to commemorate the campaigns in which soldiers had served or the service they had rendered in this way. In the eighteenth century, only officers could hope to eventually receive the Cross of Saint Louis.

Before these innovations, virtually the only reward for soldiers who had distinguished themselves in battle was promotion to the next rank and the additional responsibility this brought. Promotion was a kind of recognition of soldiers' merit and long years of service. Their wages would also be increased. Soldiers promoted to lance-corporal received an additional 36 livres a year, while those promoted to sergeant earned 162 livres a year more than the rank and file. Although these are gross amounts and deductions certainly increased as soldiers advanced through the ranks, a net gain was still achieved.

The problem for sergeants was that they were so occupied by all the details of their military jobs that it was difficult to find time to work elsewhere. Since most were married and fathers of large families, they resorted to the same tactic as their counterparts in France: their wives operated taverns, "selling wine and other beverages"[84] to soldiers.

A New Monetary System

The monetary system consisted of *livres* (pounds), *sous* (shillings) and *deniers* (pence). The same principle applied in both the mother country and New France: 12 deniers made a sou, and 20 sous made a livre. However, other coins existed as well: silver *écus* (the smaller of which was worth 3 livres, 6 sous, while the larger was worth 6 livres, 12 sous) and the *louis d'or* (whose value fluctuated between 11 and 20 livres until 1726, when it was fixed at 24 livres). The latter coin was rarely seen outside France.

In the colonies, hard cash was in short supply and therefore Spanish pieces of silver were widely used. This is the origin of the old nickname "piastre" for dollar in popular Quebec French.

Paper Money

Shortly after the arrival of the Navy troops in Canada, the inevitable happened: the ship carrying their pay failed to arrive in Quebec. The year was 1685 and some 500 soldiers were awaiting their wages. Intendant Demeulles then came up with the idea of using paper money, whose worth was based on the amount due. Various amounts were written by hand on playing cards, which were then signed by the intendant. This incident may seem hardly worth mentioning, but according to the economist John Kenneth Galbraith, it marked the invention of paper money as we know it today: a rectangular piece of paper on which is written a value and an official guarantee. Officials in Versailles were horrified at this measure, but when the same thing happened four years later, the same solution was adopted. Paper (or card) money became common in Canada and throughout the world.

Lodging with the Habitants

If the townsfolk were disturbed by reveille every morning, imagine how they felt when soldiers were quartered in their homes! Nevertheless, this obligation was seen in a different light than in France, where billets were viewed simply as a "curse." Many people in Canada willingly accepted billeted soldiers, because most of the recipients of this obligatory hospitality made themselves useful in a country where it was difficult "to find people to serve you."[85] Billeting was made necessary by the arrival of the Navy troops in the 1680s. Around 1685, civilians were required to provide soldiers with a bed, a straw mattress, a blanket, a cooking pot, and a place by the fire.

Lodgings were rudimentary, and most soldiers slept on straw. However, if a report of 1695 is to be believed, even the "leading inhabitants of Montreal [had] only their beds, and very few use[d] sheets."[86] Not only did soldiers sleep in private houses, they also ate there, offering their rations as a contribution to the meals. The presence of young men in uniform in the houses of local inhabitants could eventually lead to romantic liaisons with their daughters, although most people did not seem especially opposed to this. Indeed, many soldiers eventually settled in the colony with women met under these conditions.

Nevertheless, not all civilians were enthusiastic about having to lodge soldiers in their homes and some obtained exemptions in return for providing certain public services. Such was the case in 1714 of the Biron family in Montreal, which was exempted on condition that they care for the sick. Louis Trudeau obtained an exemption in 1739 in exchange for his services fighting fires. Churchmen, militia officers, nobles,

notaries, judges and other royal officials were not required to provide lodging for soldiers.

Barracks

Soldiers could be lodged with civilians in relatively populous towns, but barracks were essential where the local population was small. The first barracks were constructed at Louisbourg in the early 1720s. They occupied a very large

Soldier of the Compagnies franches de la Marine in New France, between 1750 and 1755. Reconstitution by Eugène Lelièpvre.
Canadian Parks Service.

building constructed in the royal bastion. Quarters were also established outside the fortifications in the large batteries for the soldiers keeping guard there. The company detached to Île Saint-Jean had a small barracks, and the troops on Île Royale were almost never billeted in private homes.

In view of the size of the Montreal garrison, the intendant, Michel Bégon, proposed in 1714 that a barracks be constructed to relieve the inhabitants of the city. However, they refused on the grounds that the cost of equipment and heat, which they would have to bear, would be more onerous than having soldiers in their homes. The plan was therefore abandoned. This is why no barracks were built in Montreal during the French Regime.

While Montrealers grew accustomed to having soldiers in their homes, the people of Quebec City tired of this practice and in 1720 offered to pay to equip a barracks. The governors tended to favour barracks as well because they helped to improve discipline. Various plans were discussed, but it was not until 1748 that soldiers finally entered the Caserne Royale. The next year, new recruits were put up in the Caserne Dauphine, and work was begun in the eastern part of the city on the "nouvelles casernes," which were completed in 1752. They formed the longest building in North America (180 m). After 1750, the Compagnie des canonniers-bombardiers was lodged in the guardhouses of the Saint Louis and Saint Jean gates. The Trois-Rivières garrison was so small in the eighteenth century that a single house sufficed to accommodate all the soldiers.

Room Arrangements

In theory, each room was supposed to contain a fireplace for heat and cooking, a table with two benches, and as many beds as the room would hold. This furniture was not painted. The rooms also contained bread boards, gun racks, and pegs on the walls for the equipment and personal effects of the soldiers. Rooms were also supposed to have glass windows, with wooden shutters. The floors were wooden, without carpeting, and the walls were whitewashed.

Each man's space was very limited. The rooms contained as many beds as possible, and as many soldiers as possible (three) slept in each bed! Behind this arrangement was the recognized principle of the time that two soldiers should rest while the third stood guard, as the engineer Chaussegros de Léry explained in his treatise on fortifications. As always, however, reality did not necessarily accord with theory, and often the three men wanted to sleep at the same time. According to contemporary records, "it [was] like torture for the soldiers in the middle. In summer, they [were] very hot, hardly getting any rest. The sweat [spread] and the resulting bad air cause[d] many illnesses."[87] The artillerymen were better off than foot soldiers, having "only one bed companion because [they] slept two by two"[88] in the canonnier-bombardier companies, according to one of them.

Regulation beds were made of oak. They were 1.30 m wide, 1.86 m long and 32 to 40 cm high. They were covered, in order, by a mattress, a bolster or long pillow stuffed with wool, and a straw mattress, whose straw had to be changed at least twice a year. The covers of these three objects were made of unbleached linen. On top there were two sheets of semi-bleached linen and a white, woollen blanket, with a fleur-de-lis embroidered in the middle, large enough to cover the entire bed because it was 2.7 m long by 2.27 m wide. Despite the regulations, some beds were too small. In addition, sheets were sometimes not washed often enough and straw mattresses not changed according to regulations, with the result that a thin straw dust settled everywhere. In Louisbourg, where the straw was only changed once a year, the rooms became infested with body parasites in the summer, and most soldiers preferred to sleep out on the ramparts under the open sky.

The authorities could innovate if necessary. In order to solve the space problem in the barracks in Louisbourg, they decided to build bunk beds able to accommodate four soldiers, even though they were less wide. This increased the capacity of the rooms, although at the cost of considerable overcrowding. Elsewhere, however, the usual rules were apparently applied.

This, then, was a soldier's lot in the barracks. They had no privacy and very little space. Only sergeants, who slept with their men although separated from them by wooden partitions, had single beds. To provide heat in the rigorous Canadian winters, cast-iron stoves with flue pipes were used in Quebec City instead of traditional fireplaces. In Louisbourg, where the humidity was high, records mention the use of firebacks to reflect the heat of fireplaces. However, soldiers still had to sleep with their uniforms on in the winter. Rooms were unlikely to be decorated, but they had to be orderly and clean.

This chapter on domestic life could not overlook the fact that there was no feminine influence in French barracks because women were not allowed there, unlike the custom in British barracks.

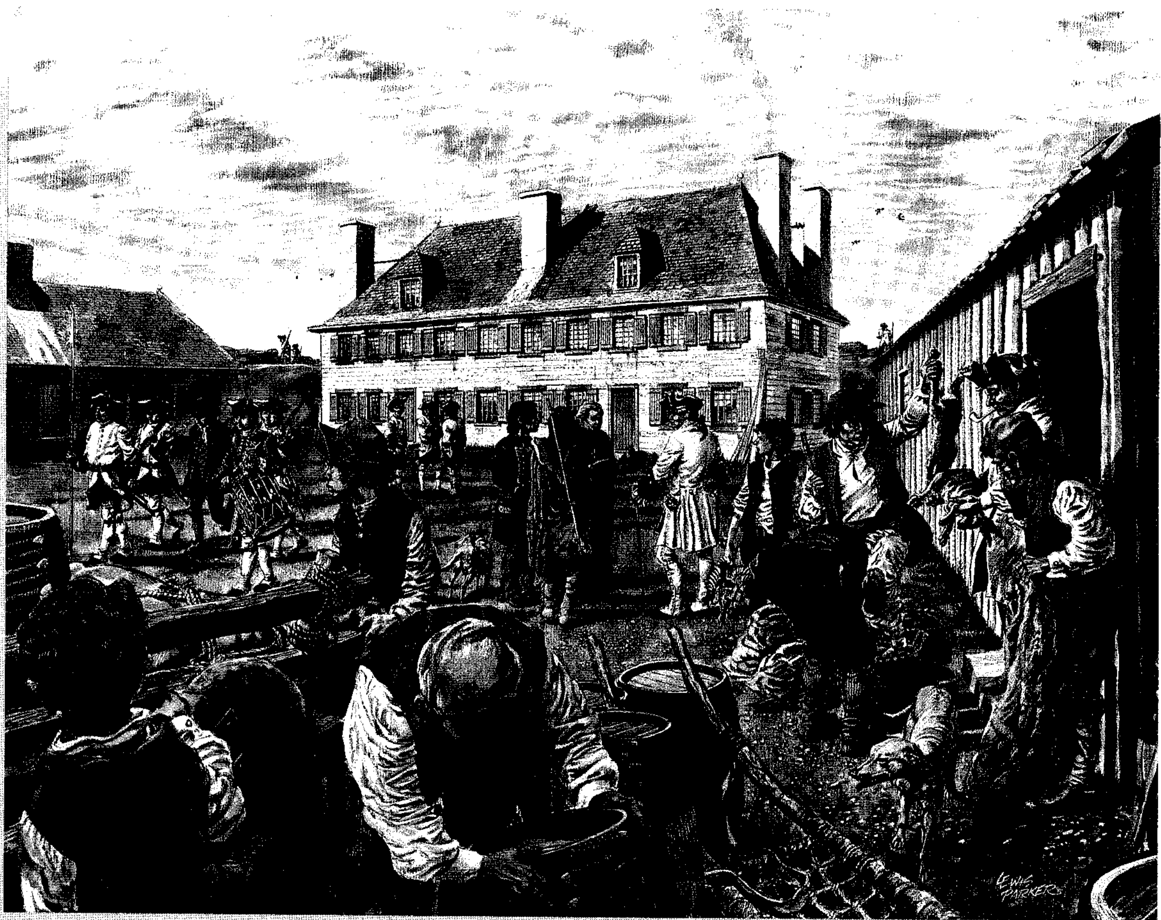
All this may seem very Spartan nowadays. Housing conditions, generally somewhat better in Quebec City and more difficult at Louisbourg, certainly did not meet modern standards of comfort. However, they were at least as good as those of garrisons in France at the time. In comparison with the overcrowded slums depicted in contemporary engravings and paintings in all the countries of Europe, soldiers in New France had decent living conditions for the times.

Life in Forts and Trading Posts

Lodgings were evidently more rudimentary in distant forts and posts. In 1695, some forts still contained "huts made of stakes covered with bark and planks"[89] to lodge soldiers. However, this difficulty was less pressing than those faced in towns, because these forts and posts had only very small garrisons. They usually contained quarters for the commandant and his officers, other quarters for the soldiers and voyageurs, a guardhouse, and a storehouse. This could vary enormously, however, from one place to another. In Michilimackinac, for example, there was one lodging for the commandant, another for the lower officers, and another for the sergeants, but no distinct lodgings for the soldiers. Some

Scene of daily life at Fort Beauséjour, around 1753. In the foreground, men are moving supplies. In the centre, an officer talks with a missionary who is accompanying Abenakis. To the right, a detachment of French soldiers escorts an English deserter. Reconstitution by Lewis Parker.

Canadian Parks Service.



of them were probably quartered in the guardhouse of this large fur-trading post, and others with civilians. In the West, Fort La Reine (today Portage la Prairie, Manitoba) also had a guardhouse and accommodation for the commandant. On the other hand, little Fort Puskoya (today The Pas, Manitoba) consisted of little more than a palisade surrounding a log building, divided into three rooms. One room served as a storehouse for trade goods, another for storing furs, and the last as quarters for everyone, including the commandant.

The situation improved over the years. The larger forts, especially those built in the eighteenth century, such as Forts Saint-Frédéric, Niagara and Chambly, contained accommodation for the troops and barracks equipment.

Food

The soldiers' basic diet was very plain. It was heavy and monotonous, of questionable quality at times, but on the whole acceptable. Food was provided in return for a fixed deduction from the soldiers' pay, whatever its true cost. Soldiers were therefore protected against increases in food prices.

At the end of the seventeenth century, the basic daily rations in New France were a pound and a half (735 g) of bread, a quarter of a pound (122 g) of salted bacon or half a pound (244 g) of salted beef, and a quarter of a pound (122 g) of dried peas. The meat was replaced by fish on the days of abstinence prescribed by the Church.

This diet varied somewhat in the different colonies and over the years. On Île Royale, for example, 16 g of butter a day and molasses were added to the basic rations so that soldiers could make beer. In Canada, peas were eliminated in the 1730s but introduced again around 1750 because some troops were quartered in barracks. At the same time, 16 g of butter were added to the daily rations. Bread was made from Canadian wheat, which soldiers wanted because it tasted better. During the 1730s, flour was even exported to make bread for soldiers on Île Royale and in Martinique.

When soldiers were on a campaign, their normal rations of salted bacon and peas did not change, but they received 612 g of biscuits a day instead of bread, and in Canada, they were given "a little brandy and tobacco."[90] Around 1750, it was decided that this diet was insufficient, in view of the energy expended by soldiers. The bread ration was increased to 972 g and the meat ration to 244 g of salted bacon or 489 g of salted beef. The ration of peas remained unchanged, and the rations of brandy and tobacco were also maintained.

Nutrition

It is hard to estimate the nutritional value of soldiers' diets because of all the variations. For example, the basic rations in Canada between 1680 and 1720 provided 3,100 calories when bacon was eaten and 2,800 when their diet included beef. Four hundred calories a day would have to be deducted between 1730 and 1740 when peas were eliminated. On the other hand, the ration increased by 100 calories after 1750 when peas were again added to the diet as well as butter.

According to the World Health Organization, a man 1.60 to 1.65 m tall and weighing 55 to 66 kg requires a minimum of 2,400 to 2,700 calories a day for light work (standing guard), 2,700 to 3,000 calories for sustained work (exercises), and 3,300 to 3,700 for heavy work (construction, military expeditions).

It is not difficult to see the deficiencies in soldiers' basic rations once sustained work was required. However, these deficiencies existed only in theory. In reality, soldiers living with civilians customarily turned over their rations to the woman of the house, who combined them with other foods to make the family meal. Generally, this widespread practice had the effect of improving soldiers' diets. Furthermore, many soldiers kept small gardens or went hunting and fishing, as Pehr Kalm noted in 1749 when passing through Fort Saint-Frédéric. He thought this rather surprising, since in his view the regular rations were quite sufficient. He found the men of the garrison to be in good health, plump, smiling and eager to amuse themselves. They were certainly not suffering from malnutrition!

Insofar as drink was concerned, soldiers could purchase beer and wine in the barracks canteen. In addition, several Amerindian dishes frequently graced Canadian tables. References can be found, for example, to *sagamité*, a corn-based porridge to which vegetables and fish or meat were added. There was also *gagaitetaakwa*, a very firm corn bread similar to the long-lasting biscuits that soldiers carried on expeditions. And of course there was *pemmican*, the dried, pounded meat to which fat was added and which would last four or five years. It seems obvious, then, that one cannot simply add up the calories in soldiers' official rations in Canada in order to determine the nutritional value of their diets, since they used the resources of the country to augment and vary their menus.

The soldiers on Île Royale were not so lucky. Since opportunities to improve their rations were limited, they relied on them much more. Their rations were therefore somewhat more generous than in Canada. The soldiers on Île Royale produced a beer that was rich in calories and doubtless had a beneficial effect, and often replaced meat with cod in their diets. However, the rest of their food had to be imported and was often spoiled or of poor quality. This was one of the causes of the discontent that led to the mutiny of 1744.

The rations for expeditions contained more calories, but here too calculations are purely theoretical because in actual practice provisions could also include dried corn and other Amerindian foods, rice, and game or fish when it was possible to get some along the way.

The Cooking Pot

In the Royal Navy, it was customary to eat in groups of seven when the soldiers were not staying in private homes. Each of these groups, or "plats" as they were called, had an iron pot with a handle, as well as a ladle for stirring and serving. For the noon meal, they usually cooked porridge over the fireplace or on the stove, adding salted bacon and anything else that could be included. For the evening meal, the bacon used at noon was simply replaced by dried peas. After supper, the pot was carefully scoured. It would not be used again until lunch because only bread was eaten for breakfast.

In theory, soldiers did not have individual plates. They ate like sailors and poor peasants in France, out of the common pot, with their bread serving as plates. However, soldiers did have pocketknives or kitchen knives, spoons and cups. These rather rough conditions apparently changed considerably during the eighteenth century, for archeological digs in several French forts in North

America have uncovered many plates, forks and spoons. As manners in general society became more refined, soldiers apparently also acquired inexpensive plates in order to eat more comfortably.

Crime and Punishment

Historians of New France all agree that the crime rate was very low; however, about half of all cases brought before the justice system involved soldiers. Among the crimes of which they were found guilty were such serious offences as rape, assault and battery, and duelling as well as crimes against property such as theft, fraud and counterfeiting. Soldiers were also charged with practices which are accepted or at least tolerated in this century, but which were often punishable by death at the time, such as homosexuality and sorcery. Finally, there was the specifically military crime, desertion, which sometimes involved treason as well.

The criminal justice system of the time, unlike that of today, placed more emphasis on exemplary punishment in public than in equality before the law. For this reason, punishment was often extremely brutal. The horror of the crime was atoned for through an equally horrible punishment.

The first level of military justice was the *Conseil de guerre*, an internal tribunal instituted in 1665 and composed of several officers from the corps of the accused. For serious crimes, such as murdering civilians, there were no special military courts, as was sometimes the case in France. The accused had to appear before a court presided over by a "civil and criminal lieutenant-general," who acted as a judge, assisted by a "special lieutenant." A prosecutor investigated the case and brought the accusations, while the accused had to defend himself, without the right to a lawyer. If the interrogation failed to reach a satisfactory conclusion, the accused was subjected to judicial torture, which was perfectly legal.

The "Question"

Between 1668 and 1758, about thirty individuals in New France, including several soldiers, were subjected to the "Ordinary and Extraordinary Question," as torture to obtain confessions was called. It consisted generally in applying torture to the accused "undressed and seated on the Question stool."[91] Sometimes the session resulted in acquittal. This was the case, for instance, of the drummer François Judicth, called Rencontre, who was accused in 1697 of bestiality. More often, however, it ended in condemnation to death. For instance, the soldier Pierre Viau, called La Rose, was tortured in 1702 and, having admitted his crime, was executed for murder. He was hanged, and his head was cut off and displayed on a stake. Those condemned could appeal to the *Conseil supérieur*, which was the highest court in the colony. Two-thirds of the appeals to this court resulted in commutations to "gentler" sentences. Those condemned to death were simply flogged in public and sent to the galleys for nine years!

The latter sentence resulted in a lugubrious ceremony carried out in public. Escorted by two Maréchaussée archers, the convict was lead "nude," i.e. dressed only in a shirt, to the main intersection of the town where he was flogged while begging pardon from God and the king. He generally wore a sign around his neck indicating the offence

"Soldier running the gauntlet." One of the customary punishments for minor offences.

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence.

committed, and sometimes he was branded with a hot iron in the shape of a fleur-de-lis. Thereafter, he was incarcerated once again until a ship arrived to carry him back to France, where he would be sent to the galleys in Marseilles. A detachment of soldiers was always present during the first part of the sentence to form a barrier between the crowd and the convict. If the soldiers showed too much sympathy for their condemned comrade, all the lance-corporals, corporals and sergeants of the detachment risked being "reduced to the ranks."[92]

Minor offences, especially indiscipline, drunkenness and offences related to morals and manners, were punished with military sanctions.

Accusations, usually brought by petty officers, were either upheld or not by more senior officers after a short investigation. Serious cases were transferred to the Conseil de guerre.

A registry kept in Louisbourg and dated April 1752 informs us that indiscipline was usually punished there by eight days in the dungeon. However, the main transgression appears to have been drunkenness. For instance, the soldier

Saint-Vile was sentenced "for being drunk and passing water before ladies. Stayed [in the dungeon]: 8 days." Others who were punished included "Lacroix . . . for becoming drunk and missing drill," who "stayed 8 days," and "Orléac . . . for leaving the cookhouse and getting drunk," who "stayed 15 days." "Fighting in the room" was usually punished by eight days in the dungeon, and showing disrespect for a superior by 15 days.

Among minor offences, the most serious was stealing from a comrade. Anyone who committed this offence covered himself in shame. Some men even had to "run the gauntlet" and were imprisoned for a month for this transgression. Running the gauntlet was the severest punishment among French infantrymen, and the only one that was physical in nature. The convicted man had to run between two rows of soldiers who struck him on the back with the ramrods of their muskets. This was considered to be a particularly ignominious punishment, and the rehabilitation of the guilty party could well require him to renew his oath to the flag before his assembled comrades-in-arms.

The punishments meted out to French soldiers for offences of this kind were rather mild in comparison with those inflicted on their British adversaries, who suffered dozens or even hundreds of strokes of the terrible cat-o'-nine-tails (a whip with nine pieces of knotted cord) for the same offences. The more moderate French punishments produced the same results, without leaving the horrible scars found on the backs of the unfortunate British soldiers.

Desertion

Desertion was viewed as a refusal to fight the king's enemies. It was the ultimate dishonour. Worse yet, since there was no place of refuge in deserter's own country, he often was forced to flee to the enemy and provide information in order to gain acceptance. In times of war, deserters often had to join the enemy forces and fight against their former comrades-in-arms. For all these reasons, desertion was viewed as the most heinous crime that soldiers could commit.

Desertion was clearly not a major problem in New France, despite the alarmist statements made by officers and governors from time to time. About one-tenth of French soldiers in Europe are believed to have deserted each year. Desertion in New France was much less frequent. At the same rate, there would have been about 80 deserters a year in Canada during the first half of the eighteenth century; generally, however, there were fewer than six, or only about one percent of the total forces. Île Royale, with an average of four deserters a year between 1721 and 1742, even had a slightly lower rate.

Were French soldiers overseas therefore more patriotic than their counterparts at home? Perhaps, but probably not. A more plausible explanation would be that North American geography discouraged desertion, with its hundreds of kilometres of forests and waterways to cross before refuge could be found. In addition to having the Maréchaussée on their heels with a detachment of soldiers or militiamen, deserters had to cross the territory of Amerindians allied with the French, who often lay in wait. This had a somewhat discouraging effect! If, by chance, a deserter succeeded in reaching New England, he might well receive a rather cool welcome from this puritanical, Protestant society where only English and

Dutch were spoken. His future prospects were therefore fairly dim. In fact, quite a few deserters were captured – more than half of those from Île Royale.

Between 1635 and 1684, desertion was punished by the death penalty, and thereafter by being sent to the galleys. In the latter case, the guilty party would be chained, his hair shaved off, and theoretically at least (although the punishment was rarely carried out) have his nose and ears slit and his cheeks branded with two fleurs-de-lis. In 1702, the king reinstated capital punishment for soldiers captured trying to reach the English colonies. A few years later, a distinction was introduced between those who were traitors, who would still suffer the ultimate penalty, and those who simply fled "into the depths of the forests,"[93] who would be sent to the galleys. The policy was reversed again in 1717, when the death penalty was restored for all cases of desertion. However, at the same time a system of drawing lots to determine the sentence was introduced. Four pieces of paper were placed in a hat. The unfortunate person who drew the black one was executed, while the others went to the galleys. In actual fact, this draw system was not used much, except to serve as an example now and then.

The soldiers condemned to death were usually shot. Since those who succeeded in finding refuge among the enemy were rarely captured, they were tried in absentia and their sentence was "read out at the head of the troops assembled for this purpose, and posted."[94]

In actual practice, a certain amount of clemency was shown, depending on the type of desertion. In 1742, for example, a soldier named Saint-Louis eloped from his garrison in Montreal with a young black woman. Judging that it was dealing with a youthful antic, the Conseil de guerre merely ruled that Saint-Louis continue his service in the colonial forces. There is also mention of soldiers who deserted under the effects of alcohol but, realizing the error of their ways when they sobered up, then returned to their base. Occasionally, the king ordered an amnesty for all deserters, when they could emerge from hiding and rejoin their units with a full pardon. This was meant primarily for deserters who had not left the colony and were hidden by civilians who took pity on them, to the bitter disappointment of the commandant and the Maréchaussée. This was the case of two of the eight soldiers who failed to answer the call in 1738.

Mutiny

Mutiny was rare in New France, and that of the Louisbourg garrison in 1744 was by far the most significant case. After the Île Royale garrison was sent back to France in 1745, eight of its instigators were executed, making the repression of this mutiny the most serious in the history of the colonies under the Ancien Régime.

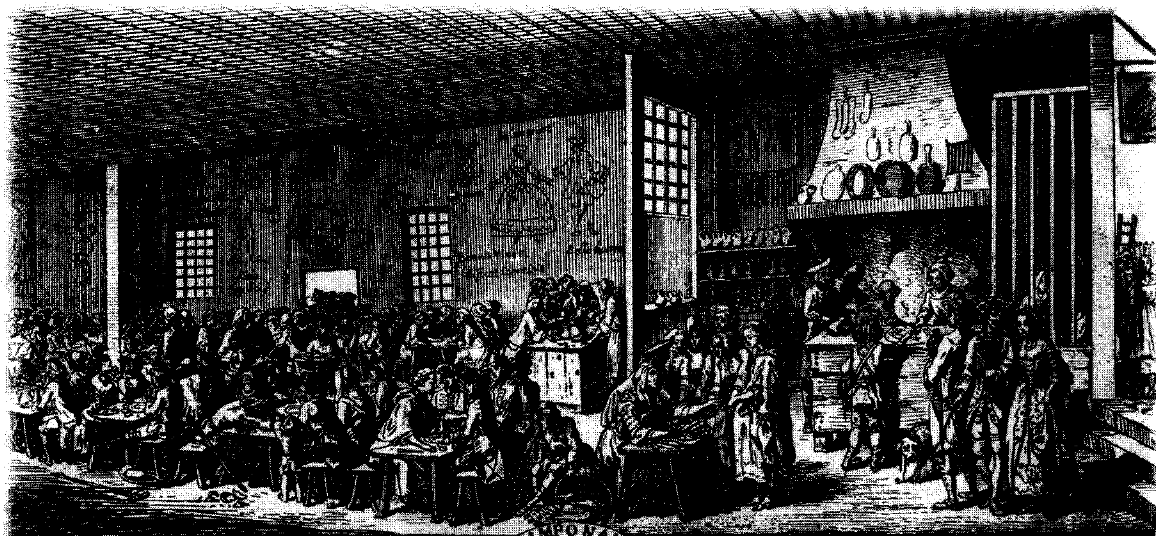
In Canada itself, despite occasional rumours, the only genuine rebellion against military authority occurred at Fort Niagara in July, 1730. It was directed against by Commandant Rigaudville, who was considered overly severe. News of the mutiny reached Montreal, and a detachment of 20 elite soldiers was sent out under the command of Captain La Gauchetière. Order was re-established without difficulty, and the two leaders of the mutiny were arrested and returned to Montreal, where they were condemned to be hanged (although they should have been shot). However, they succeeded in escaping and disappeared, almost certainly to the British colonies. Rigaudville was judged by the authorities to be a good commandant and retained his position at Fort Niagara for a few more years.

How Soldiers Amused Themselves

What did soldiers do when not on duty or working? Playing games of chance and drinking come immediately to mind. This is not incorrect, but is by no means all they did.

Soldiers certainly spent a good part of their free time drinking with comrades, playing cards and rolling dice. In the towns, taverns were open every day except Sundays during Mass and they could be found everywhere. There were more than 80 in Quebec City alone around 1750 and about 20 in Louisbourg a few years earlier. They bore such names as *La Reine Blanche* (The White Queen), *Au Lion d'Or* (The Golden Lion), and *L'Épée Royale* (The Royal Sword).

The favourite drink in Canada under the French Regime was wine. Great quantities were drunk, much more than today, in proportional terms. In 1739, for example, enough wine was imported to provide every adult in the colony with 32 L. This is more than double the present consumption in the province of Quebec, which is about 14 L per year. Wine drinkers were concentrated primarily in the towns, where only one-fifth of the population lived. This considerably increased the amount that urban dwellers had to drink. It was not by accident that most troops could be found in towns. People also drank brandy (calvados, cognac or rum), cider, and hop or spruce beer. The latter was very popular in the countryside and at isolated posts.



Interior of a tavern, around 1750. Numerous soldiers can be seen drinking jugs of wine with their comrades and girlfriends. Contemporary engraving.
Canadian Parks Service.

Singing and Dancing

Soldiers had other ways to amuse themselves as well. Canonnier-bombardier Bonin spoke of one of his comrades who suffered from the "faults of gaming and drink" and who was "nasty, quarrelsome and often took his sword in hand" when he had drunk. When sober, however, he was "gentle and pleasant, especially toward women" and loved to dance. He taught Bonin how to dance, and took him to dances so often and with such good effect that in three months Bonin became his "runner-up in this art."[95]

One can deduce from this account that excessive gaming and drinking were deemed "a fault," but that dancing was considered a harmless activity and was very popular, like today. Some taverns offered not only drink but also music so that people could dance. Soldiers were of course for the most part single young men, and this was a prime opportunity for them to meet young women. The dancers at the tavern of Marguerite Brusseau, called "la Vadeboncoeur," were so enthusiastic that the floorboards shook in her establishment on Saint-François Street in Quebec City.

Soldiers also like to sing and had an impressive repertoire of "drinking songs" celebrating war, peace, love and even enemy generals. Songs such as "Malbrough s'en va-t-en guerre," "Joli Tambour," "Auprès de ma blonde," "Cadet Rousselle," and "Chevaliers de la Table ronde" are still very popular among French Canadians. There were many other songs as well that have now been largely forgotten, such as "Buvons, chers camarades . . . je m'en vas-t-à-la guerre, servir le roi."[96]

Chasing Women

The gallantry of soldiers is legendary, and many a young woman was attracted to them. After all, soldiers were healthy, bright-eyed young men. Canonnier-bombardier Bonin relates that his seductive Parisian comrade liked to break the hearts of women, "whom he studiously deceived."[97]

It is not surprising to hear that these youths, drunk on wine, women and song, occasionally grew noisy and caused some commotion. When the public peace was disturbed, the morality of the time condemned all their activities as "licentious." One particularly ill-humoured governor general noted that some of his soldiers led "shameless lives with all sorts of libertines who make them unfit for service." He continued,"You find them at night, drunk and running around the streets."[98] Reveille at dawn caught many of his soldiers still pretty groggy, and he therefore recommended that barracks be constructed in order to raise moral standards – a rather illusory response to the exuberance of young soldiers, as we are still discovering today!

We can hardly overlook paid erotic adventures as well. In Europe, prostitutes followed in the wake of armies, but in New France there were no clear counterparts for these mobile brothels. Military raids were carried out under conditions that were far too difficult for accompanying *filles de joie*. However, brothels whose clients were mostly soldiers and sailors existed in towns where troops were often posted for long periods of time. For instance, there was "a house of women and girls to commit the crime of indecent acts"[99] in Montreal after 1667, when part of the Carignan regiment was in town. In 1686 Captain Crisafy attempted, without success, to prevent his men from frequenting the house "of ill repute" run by Marie Brunet, called Belhumeur, in Montreal. Some prostitutes did not have any particular place to

practise their trade, such as the one who spent a summer's night with three soldiers near the ramparts in Quebec in 1696, or the Montreal girl found in the company of two soldiers, "sleeping all together"[100] in an abandoned house in 1754.

Île Royale posed a particular problem because there was little for soldiers to do in their spare time except drink. They could play games, of course, but soon tired of cards and skittles. There were very few women, and prostitutes charged high rates, while the soldiers had little money and were often in debt. Finding themselves isolated in this difficult, foggy climate, many of them grew dispirited and took refuge in alcohol. The taverns in town were very busy, and every day soldiers slipped away from the shipyards to go and drink in the surrounding woods.

Marriage and Colonization

From the very beginnings of New France, encouraging soldiers to marry and become colonists was considered a good method of stimulating growth. The most famous example of this type of colonization was the marriage of discharged soldiers from the Carignan Regiment to the "Filles du Roi" sent over from France for this purpose. After the 1680s, other men followed in their wake who would remain in New France after being discharged from the Navy troops. How many of the approximately 7,800 soldiers who came to Canada between 1683 and 1755 decided to remain? Given that the number demobilized each year was actually fairly modest, and that sometimes, especially in times of war, the governor general refused all permissions to marry in order not to weaken the garrison, it is possible that 2,000 to 3,000 of these soldiers opted to become colonists in Canada.

Soldiers who married and wished to establish themselves as farmers in the colony received assistance from the authorities, because "good plowmen" were needed.[101] They could obtain land on seigneuries, which had often been given to officers, or settle nearby. For instance, Governor General Vaudreuil allowed 30 soldiers to settle in the area of his seigneury in 1723. Most chose to live on the banks of the St. Lawrence, especially in the Montreal area where the main garrison was located, although others scattered over considerable distances. Married former soldiers were the first colonists to settle land around Detroit when it was founded in 1701.

Grants of land were virtually unthinkable in France and therefore a major reason for a soldier to remain in Canada. The difficulties of clearing the land and beginning to farm it were offset, at least in part, by government grants to new colonists. These included food, a cow and the necessary farming implements, as well as the assignment of a few troops "to help him build his lodging."[102] Soldiers of the Carignan-Salières Regiment were given either 100 livres or 50 livres, plus a year's rations, to begin their new lives. On the other hand, soldiers of the Compagnies franches de la Marine theoretically only received a year's pay and their uniform. After 1726, they also received a hunting musket.

Permission to Marry

In France after 1681, soldiers were forbidden to marry without the permission of army authorities, which was not easily granted. Although no specific instructions were issued respecting colonial troops, administrators preferred to adhere to the practices used in the

homeland if the garrison was too weak. Insufficient numbers of new recruits arrived from France to replace all those who wanted to marry. Therefore, even though a royal order dated May 1698 permitted soldiers who wanted to stay to be discharged at their first request, "one [could] state with certainty," according to one contemporary memoir, "that this order was never regularly observed by the governors general, and that if they had observed it, they would often have found their troops severely depleted."[103]

In practice, soldiers were therefore allowed to marry "at the pleasure" of the governor until 1715, when the bishop decided to intervene. According to Monseigneur Duplessis de Mornay, marriage was primarily a religious matter, and he accordingly did not hesitate to marry several officers and "many soldiers" without receiving permission first.[104] Although reprimanded in 1718 by Governor General Vaudreuil, who accused him of disobeying royal commands, the bishop continued to go his own way and a few days later celebrated the marriage of another soldier. The dispute reached a head in 1720 when the bishop, still without permission, married the governor general's own nephew, Lieutenant de Lantagnac, to "a girl without property or birth, whose mother had been seen working for her father in a tavern."[105] Monseigneur Duplessis informed the furious governor general that public morality required that soldiers marry, and he warned against the disorder that would erupt if unmarried soldiers and their female companions showered the colony "with an infinity of illegitimate children."[106] The king finally resolved the issue, ruling that the permission of military authorities was needed for soldiers to marry.

Married Soldiers

This incident shows that a considerable number of soldiers married despite the regulations forbidding them to do so. In particular, most sergeants were married. Other soldiers, already married, waited impatiently to be released from military service, a wish that was granted to them when a especially large crop of new recruits arrived from France. In 1747, one-third of the troops were either married or too old or infirm to serve, according to Governor General La Galissonnière. The bishop was certainly correct when he claimed that many soldiers were cohabiting with their female companions while awaiting permission to marry.

The soldiers posted to distant forts also need to be considered. It was doubtless their wives who were "necessary for services in the garrison" as "bakers, washerwomen, or other domestic servants."[107] In the most remote small forts, some soldiers apparently married Amerindian girls in accordance with Amerindian marital customs, a practice commonly called marrying "country style." It was thus evident that soldiers should be free to marry, and that is what La Galissonnière recommended in 1747.

Originally, the population of Louisbourg was composed primarily of soldiers who had become habitants. However, the situation evolved differently than in Canada because it was very difficult for ordinary soldiers to find girls to marry there. Although they were encouraged to stay, the vast majority of discharged soldiers on Île Royale therefore took advantage of their free passage back to France.

Retirement

Prior to the eighteenth century, old soldiers who had served in New France did not have any "health insurance" or pension upon their release from the service. Six deniers were deducted from every livre of a soldier's wages to support pensioners, but the system was not well organized. An attempt was made to take care of older soldiers by keeping them with the troops as long as possible, but what could be done with those who were too disabled or ill to serve? These men were reduced to relying on the generosity of monks and nuns, or in the worst cases, to living as beggars.

Les Invalides de la Marine

Fortunately for them, Louis XIV created Les Invalides de la Marine, which provided all soldiers, sailors and others serving in the navy with a kind of "pension plan." In 1712, this institution was begun in Canada. Among its beneficiaries were also militiamen disabled in the line of duty. Thereafter, a few soldiers a year, most of them elderly, received the status and pension of an "invalide de la Marine" at the end of their service.

Officer of the Compagnies franches de la Marine of Canada in full dress, around 1690. Reconstitution by Michel Pétard.

Canadian Department of National Defence.

OFFICERS

Nobles and Commoners

During the Ancien Régime, service as an officer could lead to high positions in the state bureaucracy, although success depended in part on birth, social rank, wealth and influence at the royal court. Nobles sought to fight off commoners for positions as officers, claiming that these positions were the exclusive province of the nobility. Under Louis XIV, such claims had to be tempered because the Sun King emphasized competence above all else. Under Louis XV, the nobility recovered some of its lost ground, although it failed to make positions as officers the exclusive domain of the aristocracy. This goal was finally achieved under Louis XVI, when all candidates to be officers in the home army had to present their genealogy and certified documents proving their noble descent.

This was the general context, therefore, in which the colonial forces in New France operated. The "Canadian nobility" was not an aristocracy by bloodlines in the sense required by the army. Apart from a few families whom the king had raised to the nobility, those who could meet the genealogical requirements were few and far between. All officers claimed to be gentlemen (*gentilshommes*), however, because this was essential to their status. In theory, gentilshommes were the younger sons of noble families,

although the definition had many loopholes and commoners who became officers qualified for the same title.

As a result of this state of affairs, ambitious commoners and poor gentlemen found it advantageous to seek their fortunes in the colonial forces because nobles of the blood preferred to remain in France. Officers who went to the colonies in the seventeenth century hoped one day to be given their own seigneury and maybe even a title. By the end of the century, they could also hope to become knights of the Royal and Military Order of Saint-Louis.

The Emergence of Canadian Superior Officers

Throughout the first half of the eighteenth century, Canadian officers found their way into positions on the general staffs. Some even became colonial governors.

The family of the Marquis Rigaud de Vaudreuil provides the best example of the rise of Canadians to senior ranks in the colonial service. The Marquis arrived in Canada in the 1680s as commandant of the Navy troops, before becoming governor of Montreal in 1695 and then governor general of New France in 1703. His sons, all born in Quebec, forged remarkable careers. Louis-Philippe was promoted to admiral in 1748, and Jean became a major-general in the army in France in 1745. François-Pierre assumed the post of governor of Montreal in 1757, and Joseph-Hyacinthe became governor general of what is now the Republic of Haiti in 1753. However, it was the career of Pierre de Rigaud, Marquis de Vaudreuil-Cavagnal that most marked the history of New France. An ensign in 1708, he became governor of Trois-Rivières in 1733, governor of Louisiana in 1743, and governor general of New France in 1755. He was the first officer born in Canada to attain the highest position in all New France.

The Vaudreuils were not the only family to distinguish themselves in this way. Several members of the Le Moyne family became governors of fortified towns in Canada, such as the Baron de Longueuil, Charles Le Moyne, who occupied this position in Montreal. Officers of Canadian birth also served in other colonies, especially in Louisiana, where Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville was governor twice before being replaced by his compatriot, Vaudreuil-Cavagnal. Antoine Le Moyne de Châteauguay became a royal lieutenant in Martinique in 1727, then governor of French Guyana in 1737. He was appointed governor of Île Royale in 1745, but died before he could take up this position.

Although these officers were scions of great Canadian families, the names Vaudreuil and Le Moyne did not count for much among the swarms of courtiers surrounding the king at Versailles. The training and military prowess of these Canadians must therefore have played a major role in all the promotions they received.

Education and Knowledge

By the 1680s, or nearly two centuries before the founding of the "first" Canadian military college in Kingston, Ontario, an educational system for officers had been established in New France. It was thus at the time of Louis XIV that instruction for gentlemen cadets leading to an officer's commission in the regular forces was inaugurated in Canada.

It is difficult to evaluate the quality of the instruction provided to officers in New France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Entering the armed forces as cadets in their adolescence, the young *gentilshommes* learned Canadian tactics and familiarized themselves with the country by going on expeditions. However, they also spent much of their lives in towns. It was during this time that they were taught reading, writing, mathematics, religion, dancing and a few technical and theoretical aspects of the art of war. At least, this was the basic curriculum of cadets in France. How was this information conveyed? A document lifts at least a corner of the veil covering this mystery. In the mid-eighteenth century in Montreal, there was a "captain of the gentilshommes of [the] colony."[108] It now seems completely logical that there would have been an experienced officer under whose authority the cadets gathered and who was responsible for organizing their education and disciplining them. The rare written records left by Canadian officers clearly show that they received basic instruction in military theory and technique. The non-military part of their education was probably imparted in seminaries.

Books of all kinds were common among officers. Some had personal libraries. In the mid-seventeenth century, the major of Montreal, Lambert Closse, had thirty volumes. In the eighteenth century, a good library usually contained several religious books as well as works of history, literature, travel and the military arts. Among the latter were books of army orders and regulations, and treatises on fortifications, tactics and artillery. Books were very expensive, so the larger libraries belonged to older officers, especially to members of the general staff.

While serving in the military, a few officers engaged in scientific research and experiments. Early in the eighteenth century, Gédéon de Catalogne served in Canada, on Île Royale and Île Saint-Jean and at the same time corresponded with the Academy of Sciences regarding his observations about longitude and the drift of ships. Ensign Jacques-Pierre Daneau de Muy, who in the early 1730s had the command of Fort Saint-Joseph in what is now the state of Michigan, took

An "aiguillette" cadet receiving instruction from a sergeant of the Compagnies franches de la Marine in New France, between 1750 and 1755. After 1749, gold lace edged the cuffs and pocket flaps of sergeants' uniforms, indicating their rank. Reconstitution by Eugène Lelièpvre.

Canadian Parks Service.

Sergeant, drummer and soldier of the Compagnies franches de la Marine in New France, between 1685 and 1700. Reconstitution by Michel Pétard.
Canadian Parks Service.

advantage of his time there to study the local plant life and returned with numerous specimens, of which "many [were] unknown in France." On the basis of his experiments, he wrote an "instructive paper"[109] describing their medicinal effects and presented it in France. In Louisbourg, conditions for observing stars were especially good, and Captain Michel de Gannes devoted himself to this science. Several civilians and officers, including the governor of the fortress and the engineer of the fortifications, owned expensive telescopes. An observatory was built at Louisbourg by the Marquis de Chabert in 1751. Other officers took an interest in geology, the lifestyle of the Amerindians, and the local fauna.

Officers' Duties

The daily lives of officers were very different from those of their men. At the time, an enormous social gulf separated aristocrats and bourgeois from the lower classes, from which most soldiers were drawn. Officers had at least one valet, usually a man from their company, to serve them. They were not expected to

perform manual labour, and their social rank conferred various privileges upon them.

In general, officers did not participate actively in such military activities as drills, but supervised them instead. Captains were responsible for entire companies and paid particular attention to their junior officers and to relations with more senior officers and other captains. Lieutenants, ensigns and second ensigns attended to the details of daily life: ensuring that weapons and uniforms were in good condition and that the soldiers were shaved and clean, visiting the sick and injured in hospital, inspecting the sections standing guard, and overseeing drills. When companies were lodged in barracks, the subordinate officers inspected the rooms in the morning to ensure that their occupants kept them clean and orderly. They repeated this procedure in the evening to ensure that all soldiers were present and "above all . . . that no harlots had found their way in." Sergeants were responsible for carrying out the orders of junior officers, who were expected "to report on all these details" to the captain.[110]

Some officers were allowed to be absent for particular periods of time. For instance, in 1729 the governor general allowed poor officers to live on their lands, so long as two officers were always present with the company to stand guard and take part in inspections. There were also some officers who "by their age or infirmities" were "no longer able to serve."[111]

Although their daily lives differed enormously according to their ranks, a certain friendliness usually reigned between officers and soldiers in Canada. As early as the 1680s, the officer La Hontan noted that troops in Canada had to be treated differently from those in Europe. A gentle approach, he wrote, was the best way "to win the hearts of soldiers"[112] and thus gain their loyalty and confidence. Kalm, for his part, noted with some surprise that soldiers respected their officers, enjoyed considerable freedom, and treated each other as comrades. The type of military service performed in Canada encouraged this more intimate interaction because soldiers often lived in small, isolated groups, each man having to count on the others.

The first duty of officers was to lead their men into battle. Canadian officers were particularly diligent in this regard. Expeditions against New England or hostile Amerindians always included several officers, especially young men, as well as cadets who had volunteered. This was not only because of their legendary courage but also because this was the only way to familiarize themselves with the particular military tactics practised in Canada.

Officers' Incomes

Officers did not receive wages because they held commissions. Instead they received "stipends" from the Royal Treasury. In the 1660s, captains in the Carignan-Salières Regiment received 900 livres a year, lieutenants 360 and ensigns 270. Twenty years later, officers of the Compagnies franches de la Marine received a little more, but like soldiers, their incomes did not change thereafter. Captains received 1,080 livres a year, lieutenants 720, ensigns 450 and second ensigns 300. In theory, officers had to feed, house and dress themselves and even purchase their own arms, in addition to keeping up the standard of living

Sergeant of the Compagnies franches de la Marine of Canada between 1701 and 1716. Reconstitution by Michel Pétard.
Canadian Parks Service.

which their status as gentlemen demanded. It is therefore not surprising that some were considered "poor." They were very vulnerable to rising prices for food and lodging.

Bonuses were awarded for distinguished service in battle, and officers could also put particular skills to work, such as knowledge of "Indian languages,"[113] which enabled them to act as interpreters. They did not earn enormous sums in this way, but every little bit helped.

Colonial officers in New France did not have as many opportunities as their counterparts in the motherland to enhance their earnings by doing other work. Officers in France were paid a certain amount for each new recruit they brought to the regiment, took a cut of the price of the clothing and equipment they purchased for new recruits, and, with a little luck, were able to sell their commissions when they left the army. Officers in the Navy troops in New France could not do any of this. Their commissions were issued, not sold, and belonged at all times to the king. The recruits' uniforms and virtually all their kits were given to them directly by the Navy, and therefore there was no percentage to be taken. Finally, nothing could be earned through recruitment, which was carried out by the Navy or its agents in France. At Louisbourg, officers succeeded in gaining control of the barracks canteens. In Canada, however, soldiers lived among civilians or in distant forts, so that it was difficult to control the food supply.

One Big Family

In New France, officers, and to a certain extent the commercial bourgeoisie, formed one big family. Beginning in the seventeenth century and increasingly in the eighteenth, marriages took place between the various families belonging to the military and commercial elites. It was not unusual to combine these two activities, as could be seen in the Le Moyne and Le Ber families.

In France, such alliances were frowned upon because nobles were reluctant to lower themselves to the level of merchants. Nobles derived their incomes from renting out their lands or from their stipends as royal officers; commercial ventures were for commoners. Applying such a principle in New France would have made it impossible for both the colony and the officer class to survive. In 1685, the king bowed to reality and allowed officers to engage in commerce without fear of diminishing their status.

In general, however, the families of Canadian officers preferred to marry among themselves. One-third of Canadian officers married officers' daughters, and about one-sixth married young women of the bourgeoisie. The remainder married into the families of nobles or commoners. Like ordinary soldiers, officers had to request the governor's permission to marry, which was generally granted.

Through these marriages, "military families" began to predominate in the colony. While only one-fifth of officers married into other officers' families in the seventeenth century, this increased to one-half by the mid-eighteenth century. Thus officers' families gradually came to form a kind of colonial military caste.

Some Canadian officers had seigneuries, and others had lands which enhanced their incomes a little, in addition to providing them with a home when they retired. However, unlike the nobles in France, they could not earn much from their properties because of the small population and the limited area in which their products could be sold. Other officers married into bourgeois families which supported them. The remainder had to support their families on their military stipends. The latter officers were often helped by appointments as commandants of Western forts.

Western Posts and the Fur Trade

The commandants of forts engaged in the fur trade could take part in this activity, thereby enhancing their incomes. This privilege was extended to them in return for agreeing to be exiled for a number of years – an older version of the bonuses that modern companies extend to personnel who agree to work in remote areas or under dangerous conditions. In the seventeenth century, officers were apparently quite willing to take part in the fur trade; in the eighteenth century, however, they preferred to cede these privileges to merchants in return for fixed payments, and the number of officers actively involved in the fur trade diminished. Some commandants preferred to abstain from any direct participation at all. According to a recent study, the "role of post commandants and officers in these trading companies has been exaggerated."[114] After 1742, royal policy ordained that all direct trading should be in the hands of merchants, thus confirming the established practice.

What were the reasons for this change? Even though active involvement in commerce was tolerated in the colonies, it was thought to degrade the "noble" profession of soldiery. Anxious to preserve their honour, most officers distanced themselves from commerce and emphasized their status as officers and gentlemen, even though commerce in their case was not an end in itself but a way of prospering in a country that offered few alternatives.

The captains and lieutenants of these distant forts exerted considerable influence over the fur trade because they had the delicate task of maintaining favourable political and economic relations with the Amerindians. Not only the security of New France, but to a large extent its commercial prosperity, depended on the diplomatic skills of these officers. They represented France and her king at the fringe of the known world.

Promotions

Officers' commissions in the army in France had a monetary value and promotions could be bought. There were even some "child colonels," for whom this rank had been purchased. This practice did not exist among the Navy troops. Commissions and promotions were awarded in Versailles by the king, at the recommendation of the minister and colonial administrators. While various families may have curried favour with governors general and intendants, promotions were based primarily, though not exclusively, on years of service.

In general, officers had to wait years for promotion. In the meantime, unofficial lists of "expected" ranks were established. The officers on this list were expected to receive their next promotions when the positions became available. This system was mainly employed during the long years of peace between 1713 and 1744 when few people died and the number of officers did not change much. Thereafter, war and the increasing size of the armed forces made promotion more likely, and ten years later, "expected" ranks no longer existed.

Lifestyle

Officers and their families enjoyed more comfortable surroundings than did soldiers. When officers lived with civilians, they were provided with their own rooms. More and more Canadians held positions as officers, and they sometimes lived in their own houses in town. This was true at Louisbourg as well, where part of the barracks was outfitted for them. Captains were entitled to private rooms, while junior officers were placed two to a room.

Officers' rooms contained one or two beds, often four-posters, with a table and chairs, a chest, and possibly a wardrobe. Bed and window curtains were often green, a favourite colour in barracks. Wealthier officers had tapestries, and many hung mirrors and pictures on their walls. All possessed certain basic amenities such as china, silver or pewter cups and table settings, which could be found not only in the cities but also in such isolated posts as Port Toulouse on Île Royale and Fort Saint-Frédéric or Michilimackinac in Canada.

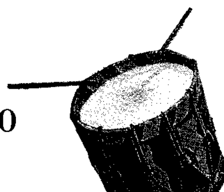
Amusements

Officers certainly expected to spend their leisure time engaged in more refined activities than did soldiers. Some officers frequented taverns, but more often they attended the parties and balls thrown regularly by the bourgeois and superior officers of the town.

The pleasures of the table played an important role in their social lives. The engineer Franquet left an excellent description of a dinner given by the governor of Trois-Rivières for officers and their wives in July, 1752. Seated in the dining room, around a table with 20 settings, the guests particularly appreciated "the profusion and delicacy of the dishes from the best provinces in France." "We drank all sorts of wine, always chilled," continued Franquet's account. "Imagine the pleasure of this, especially as the weather was very hot."[115]

Madame Bégon, a fine Canadian letter-writer, left some delicious passages on the social life of the Montreal military elite during the 1740s. There was an endless succession of balls, parties and receptions, and dancing masters were very busy. Some balls were given especially for cadets and young officers so that they could meet girls from their own class. Young or not so young, masked or not, they danced the minuet, sang, and drank toasts to each other's health with "excellent" champagne and good wines. One particular evening, the officers Noyan and Saint-Luc raised their glasses so often that they could not get up. Another time, the Baron de Longueuil was "more than tipsy," and Captain Noyan fell while dancing the minuet and lost his wig. Manners at the balls given by the governor general were somewhat less free and easy!

The clergy of the era generally opposed the merrymaking of the officers, though without much success. According to Baron de La Hontan, the clergy were extremely narrow-minded. One of their



representatives even went so far as to destroy his copy of Petronius. The clergy looked askance not only at balls and certain books; the theatre also came in for its share of criticism. In 1694, Frontenac organized comedy productions at the Château Saint-Louis in order to "amuse the officers a little."[116] *Nicodème* and *Mithridate* were put on, to the great indignation of Monseigneur de Saint-Vallier, who discreetly offered the governor general 100 pistoles not to mount Molière's *Tartuffe*. Frontenac agreed to change his plans, took the money, and spread gossip about the whole affair, to great general amusement. Things had not changed much 50 years later, when the bishop of New France, Monseignor Dubreuil de Pontbriand, denounced the balls and parties and even suspended a priest for having taken part in a reception given by the intendant. This didn't get him anywhere, as shortly thereafter a farce was staged at a ball for officers and bourgeois, which ridiculed the clergy's stand. The authors of the farce are unknown, but one can imagine that some officers had a hand in it.

Officers also spent their spare time playing cards, dice, chess, checkers, backgammon and ninepins, in addition to going hunting and fishing. They shared the Canadians' passion for racing horses, with riders in summer and drawing sleighs over ice in winter, as well as for the betting that accompanied it.

Terrace of a tavern, around 1750. The soldiers can be recognized by their swords. Contemporary engraving.
Canadian Parks Service.

Officers' amorous adventures seem to have been less in the public eye than those of ordinary soldiers. It was not considered honourable for officers to frequent bawdy houses. However, women of easy virtue could always go to their houses, as happened in 1687 when the commandant of Fort Chédabouctou was surprised "in bed sleeping among

[Amerindian] women or girls."[117] There were also cases of cohabitation and unwed pregnancies that were considered very scandalous at the time. The most infamous case involved Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville and Jeanne-Geneviève Picoté de Belestre during the 1680s. In general, though, officers maintained an aura of discretion around their amorous exploits and do not seem to have been caught committing too many misdemeanours, at least in comparison with other times and places.

Poor Officers and Food

Although some prosperous officers managed to eat lavishly, and others were occasionally invited to dine with the local elite, the majority did not spend their lives quaffing champagne and dining on delicacies. Indeed, life was very different for many officers with families and for some cadets. These men were poor, according to the standards of the time, because they lived on their military stipends alone. Gentlemen in the military were expected to maintain certain standards of living, which required additional income. In order to help officers maintain suitable standards, they were customarily given the same amount of food as soldiers received in their rations.

Sergeant and soldier of the Compagnies franches de la Marine of New France, between 1716 and 1730. Reconstitution by Michel Pétard.
Canadian Parks Service.

Officers on expeditions or in distant forts were also provided with food. An order of 1748 specifying the rations for officers, chaplains, surgeons and storekeepers in these circumstances shows that their diet was basically the same as that of common soldiers: bread, salted beef or bacon, and dried peas. However, they also received some butter, olive oil, vinegar, pepper, spices, molasses, brandy and a cask of wine to last one year. Interestingly, surgeons were not provided with the latter item.

Some officers dispatched to forts in the West found the cost of maintaining their residences in Montreal prohibitive, so that they were generally allowed to take their wives with them. Their wives then received rations as well. This leads one to conclude that life in the forts was much less ribald than is commonly imagined and that a female presence brought a certain decorum. In 1742, however, the Minister of the Navy put an end to rations for officers' wives and demanded that they be sent home to Montreal. This directive was certainly obeyed where rations were concerned, and at essentially military forts such as Saint-Frédéric, but there is reason to believe that some wives remained with their husbands in forts serving primarily as trading posts, such as Michilimackinac.

Table Manners

Among officers, meals were eaten sitting at a table, with a place setting for each man. "French service" was customary,[118] meaning that the dishes were placed beside each other on the table and everyone served himself, a little like a

modern buffet. In the seventeenth century, officers dined in their coats, wearing their swords at their sides and their hats on their heads. Long tablecloths covered their thighs and protected their clothing from spills, because serviettes were not yet used. Some innovations had taken root however. Plates were replaced after each serving, and instead of eating soup from the same bowl, everyone had his own small bowl and spoon. Good manners were highly valued. Food was not eaten with the fingers. Licking one's fingers was an even worse offence, "the height of slovenliness," surpassed only by the ultimate impropriety of cleaning one's teeth with a table knife!

Eighteenth-century dinners were less ceremonious because hats were not worn. However, gracious manners were de rigueur, and everyone had a serviette. It was improper to ever put your elbows on the table, hold your knife "as village folk [did]," or show your hair or "other disgusting things," which could find their way onto your plate. One was not supposed to "smell the meat," and it was better to wait to be served by your host than to help oneself. Officers seem generally to have observed the table manners of the time, whether dining as the governor general's guests in the Château Saint-Louis or eating in a rudimentary fort on the Western prairies, for every gentleman had to "know how to behave at the table."

Justice

Officers were not exempt from the rigours of the justice system. They had to appear in military or civilian courts and before the Conseil supérieur, where they were at least permitted to wear their swords as a sign of their social standing. Gentlemen were not normally subjected to the "Question." Duelling was forbidden, and the law was rigorously applied when deaths occurred. In 1715 the Chevalier d'Argenteuil was condemned to have "his head cut off"[119] for having killed another officer. A scandal erupted in Quebec in 1748 when Lieutenant Pierre Le Gardeur de Repentigny killed a bourgeois in a duel. He compensated the widow, who pardoned him, and then took flight. He was condemned to death in absentia, but his friends appealed to the king who pardoned him. However, he was transferred to Île Royale and finished his career in India.

Moral transgressions could ruin officers' careers if they were serious enough and resulted in disgrace and banishment. Major La Freydière of the Carignan-Salières Regiment suffered this punishment in 1667 for attempting to force a woman to have sexual relations with him by imposing extra duties and punishments on her husband. Frontenac sent several "impossible"[120] officers back to France, including Sieur Bouchermin who had attempted to poison his wife.

Military transgressions judged by the Conseil de guerre were subject to review by the minister or even the king. For instance, when local authorities failed to punish Lieutenant Linctot severely enough, after he allowed two convicts to escape, Versailles stepped in, sentencing him to three months in prison in 1742. Failing to obey orders could cause an officer to be stripped of his rank or even condemned to death if serious consequences ensued. Flight in the face of the enemy, desertion and sedition were also punishable by death.

The Cross of Saint Louis

The most coveted award was the Royal and Military Order of Saint Louis, created by Louis XIV in 1693 to recognize long years of good and loyal service. The title of Knight of the Order of Saint Louis

Officer of the Compagnies franches de la Marine, around 1750. The cut of the garments evolved with fashion, which Canadian officers followed closely.
Canadian Parks Service.

(whose closest modern equivalent might be the British title of "Sir" awarded in Canada until the 1930s) honoured the entire family, although it was not hereditary. A royal edict of 1750 decreed that officers who were received into this Order would be automatically raised to the nobility, to create a military aristocracy.[121]

Officers who were knighted received a gilt enamel cross hanging from a bright red ribbon, which they wore in a coat buttonhole, high on the chest. This was the only decoration that officers could win at the time and it was much respected by Canadians. In some parts of Quebec, people still say "he's no Cross of Saint Louis," meaning that the person has no exceptional abilities.

The first officers in Canada to receive the Cross of Saint Louis were the governors Callières in 1694 and Frontenac in 1697. In 1698, a few officers on the general staff received this honour, as did d'Iberville the following year. Some captains also received the cross after 1703. In all, more than 100 officers in Canada and about 40 in Acadia and on Île Royale were admitted to the Order for their services in New France. In general, the candidates for this honour had served at least ten years, often many more, and were highly recommended to the king by the governor general.

THE MILITIA

Militia Captains

Militia captains played a very important role in the life of the colony. They were not only military leaders in times of emergency and of calls to arms, but on numerous occasions acted as a link between the people and the central administration. For example, militia captains ensured that municipal regulations were enforced and kept an eye on public works projects, to name only these two modern equivalents of their main duties. Their commissions as captains were signed by the governor general, after consultations with local authorities and the officers of the district general staff. Militia captains were usually quite popular men of acknowledged bravery, because it was well known that the proud Canadians would only obey people whom they respected. Militia captains were leading figures in their communities, who knew how to read and write. They had to be fairly well off, because the position was not paid.

People wanted to become militia captains for the honour of the position and the considerable influence they could have over community affairs. At a time when people took public ceremony and individual prestige very seriously, the militia captain's place in church was right behind the seigneur. He received the consecrated bread immediately after the seigneur and before all other parishioners. Although only soldiers and gentlemen were allowed to wear swords in France and the colonies, this privilege was extended to militia captains, as well as the right to wear a gilt gorget. These were not frivolous details or objects of jest at the

time. In 1752, Governor General Duquesne recognized only officers wearing swords and gorgets. In towns, some militia captains also carried spontoons, which were the half-pikes of officers. Like seigneurs and churchmen, militia captains did not have to pay royal taxes or billet soldiers in their homes. They were also relieved of the corvée, or statute labour by which inhabitants could be called upon for public works, although they were responsible for seeing that it was done.

These little privileges sometimes led to quarrels over the proper etiquette between the seigneur of an area, who was usually an officer of the Compagnies franches as well, and his distinguished local subject, who sometimes became all too important. However, this had few serious consequences. In some cases, militia captains served as intermediaries between the local people and their seigneurs, unless the militia captain and the seigneur were the same person, as happened more than two-thirds of the time, especially under Louis XIV. This proportion declined substantially in the early eighteenth century, when seigneurs increasingly became officers in the Compagnies franches de la Marine, freeing up militia captain positions. Whatever their civil status, the governor general and intendant expected them to be effective agents of the central authority.

Civic Affairs

Intendants often sent instructions to militia captains, frequently concerning edicts which they were expected to announce and post. This was usually done on the church steps after Mass on Sundays. If statute labour was needed, the militia captains were supposed to organize it and distribute tasks among the local people. These tasks usually consisted of constructing roads or fortifications. Militia captains were also responsible for distributing billets telling soldiers what families they would live with in the parish. They also had the thankless task of drawing up non-residency certificates, which enabled seigneurs to claim land that had been left vacant. Militia captains carried out censuses as well, because they already kept rolls indicating whether militiamen were in the parish or not.

Policing also entered the sphere of militia captains, who were sometimes asked to help the Maréchaussée capture fleeing criminals or deserters. This was a delicate task because Canadians tended to sympathize with "malefactors and deserters"[122] and were inclined to hide them. Although people may have looked the other way in less serious cases, they watched more carefully for murderers. In the towns, militia captains ensured that fire prevention and public health regulations were enforced. If necessary, they had to provide brigades for the night watch and, during times of scarcity, ensure the equitable distribution of wheat.

On some rare occasions, Canadians felt that the authorities went too far. For instance, in October 1717, the inhabitants

Canadian militiamen, first half of the eighteenth century. Reconstitution by Francis Back.
Canadian Parks Service.

of Longueuil, on the southern shore of the St. Lawrence River, were called upon to provide statute labour to build fortifications on Montreal Island across the way. They refused, saying that they would not perform any statute labour outside their parish. The authorities held firm and sent for troops, while the Longueuil militiamen assembled, arms in hand. After two days, the authorities reconsidered and everybody returned home. There would be no statute labour in Montreal for the people of Longueuil. Three years later, the intendant had to stop making seizures in the homes of certain Canadians because these measures were provoking immediate public protests by the people, who felt wronged.

The Nature of the Militia

Despite all these duties, which might seem oppressive, there was no animosity toward the institution of the militia in New France. Most people saw membership in this organization as a personal contribution to the military and social affairs of the colony. Furthermore, the militia provided a link with the authorities at a time when government was hierarchical and absolutist. This connection was important because the people of New France, unlike those of the motherland, were armed and excellent marksmen. One French administrator after another noted that the people were very proud, independent, not very inclined to swallow too many orders, and capable of resisting if the authorities went too far. The government needed the militia, and the authorities therefore exercised their "absolute" powers with some discretion.

Despite their "unruliness," Canadian militiamen were loyal to king and country. They were not rebellious, even though they adapted military regulations to suit what they thought was useful for combat. For example, the monthly drills (more frequent in times of war), which were supposed to be spent handling weapons and marching in rows, were more often spent on target practice.

Finally, the militia played an important ceremonial role on certain occasions. According to a description of a Corpus Christi procession in Varennes, all the militiamen, dressed very properly in capots and hats, drew up in a double line from the church to the wayside altar. As the sacrament passed, carried by a representative of the clergy in the company of the seigneur and the officers and sergeants of the militia, they presented arms. After the ceremony, the captains assured one another that "no tavern-keeper could get anyone drunk,"[123] for it was well known that Canadians liked to celebrate.

A less solemn and very enjoyable tradition of this era was the May Day ritual celebrating the return of the fine weather. On the first day of the month, militiamen accompanied by their wives reported to their captain, who granted them permission to plant a large fir tree at the top of which a wreath and a weather vane had been placed. The militiamen then fired a salvo in honour of their captain, who responded by firing a salute of his own. The captain was then offered a drink, and he in turn encouraged the militiamen to enter his house where a table loaded with food awaited them. The captain also offered drink, and after each glassful, a few militiamen would go out to shoot at the target on top of the maypole. Sometimes their wives took shots too, and the joyous assembly would end with a dance.

As these vignettes show, the military traditions of the militia mingled in New France with religion and folklore. Despite the petty annoyances of the authorities, there was a friendly, mutual feeling of respect between the leaders and their men. Above all, the militia was an instrument of social cohesion, perfectly adapted to the character of the people.

Chapter 6

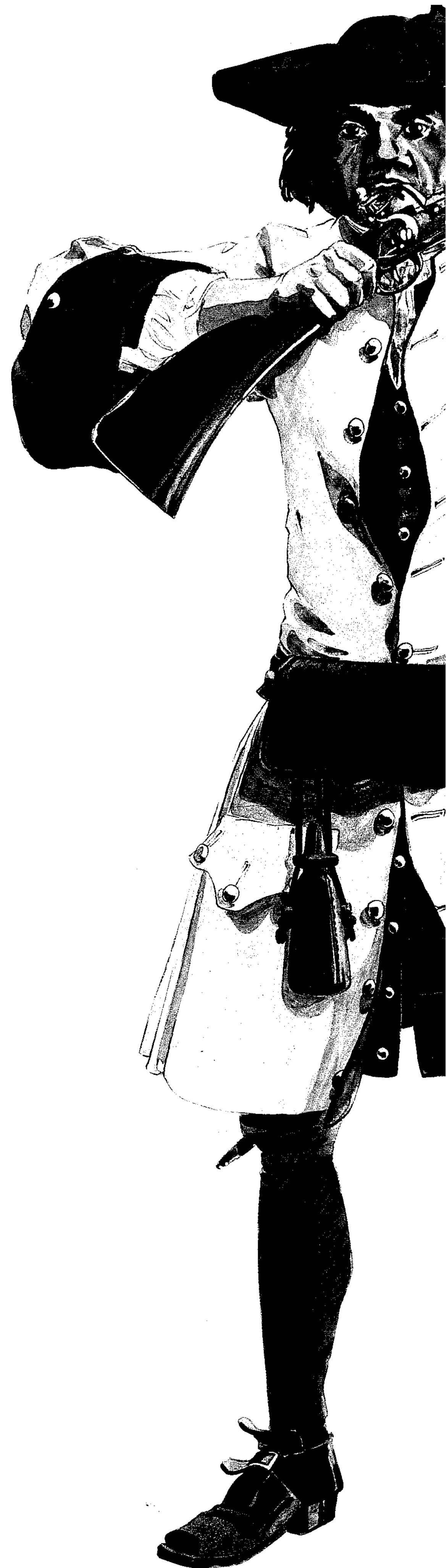
SOLDIERS OF THE ATLANTIC SEABOARD

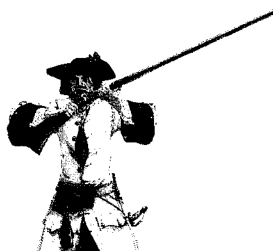
Possession of the territory along what is now Canada's Atlantic coast was a major concern in Louis XIV's military planning. However, Great Britain and its colonies to the south, especially Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Connecticut and Rhode Island, also coveted these lands. While both parties were interested in the fishery and in establishing posts to provide a safe haven for their fishermen, these activities were of secondary importance to France in determining its military strategy. The French king's main goal was to control access to the interior of the continent via the St. Lawrence River.

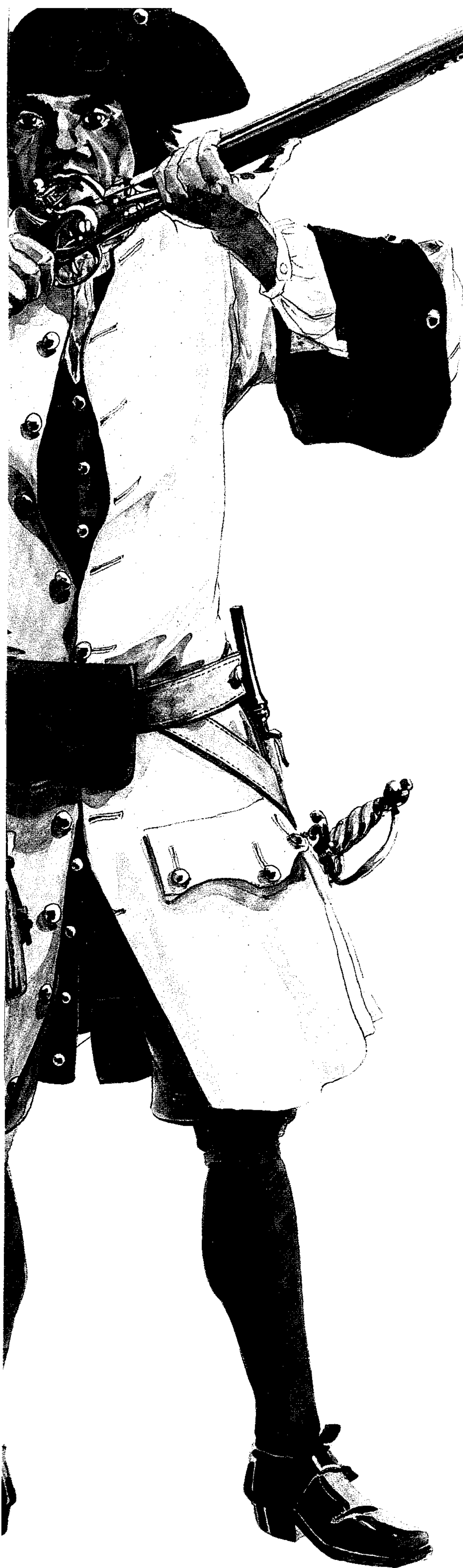
These strategic aims, combined with the proximity of English and French positions in Newfoundland and Acadia, gave rise to incessant hostilities, largely in the form of preventive attacks on enemy posts to force them to give way. The ensuing temporary seizure of posts persuaded the French governors that their strongholds on the Atlantic were in danger of being swept away. They were even more vulnerable than the forts and settlements within Canada because their tiny populations of farmers and fishermen could not adequately protect themselves. As a result, permanent garrisons of the Compagnies franches de la Marine were dispatched to these two territories. During the 1690s, these garrisons became strong enough to impose their power. When the British authorities opted for a similar approach, the coast of Newfoundland and part of Acadia were transformed into a veritable fortress.

Acadia and Newfoundland

The position of the colonists in Acadia was very different from those in Canada. The perpetual danger during the 1650s that forced the latter to leave never their homes unless armed to the teeth did not exist in Acadia, for the Amerindians there were not hostile. Indeed, the Abenakis and Micmacs were the most precious of allies. The inhabitants of the first Acadian trading posts certainly had to take up arms on occasion, and







Soldier of the Compagnies franches de la Marine of Acadia and Plaisance, between 1701 and 1713. Reconstitution by Michel Pétard. Canadian Parks Service.

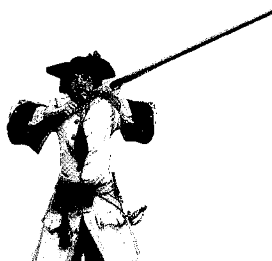
the colonists around Port-Royal were warned after 1627 to be ready to provide support to the soldiers, if necessary. However, attempts to arm the colonists, such as that made in 1670 when muskets were sent out to them, were only moderately successful. Nor were the atmosphere of feudal struggles and intermittent long periods of English occupation that were a part of life in seventeenth-century Acadia propitious to the organization of a militia.

As a result, militias did not flourish in Acadia as they did in Canada. France therefore decided to provide for the defence of this strategically vital territory in other ways.

The first contingent of troops from the Ministry of the Navy sent to Acadia set sail from La Rochelle on July 10, 1685, on board the *Saint-François-Xavier* and the *Honoré*. It was a small corps of 24 soldiers, one drummer, two lance-corporals, two corporals and a sergeant, led by a lieutenant.

This force was gradually increased, while suffering numerous attacks from the colonies in New England. In May 1688, one year before the declaration of the War of the League of Augsburg, Sir Edmund Andros, who was governor at the time, seized and pillaged Pentagoët, sending the captured garrison to Boston. The French then made Port-Royal their leading stronghold, but it too was attacked in May 1690 by more than 700 men under the command of Sir William Phips. Governor de Menneval, having only 39 soldiers at his disposal, surrendered with the honours of war. However, Phips broke his word, sacked Port-Royal, and sent the prisoners to Boston instead of back to France.

The French responded with a series of small raids on settlements in Massachusetts (in today's Maine), accompanied by their Amerindian allies, the Abenakis, who were led by the Baron de Saint-Castin. This military man had led a very interesting life. Having arrived in 1670 as an ensign, he took an interest in Amerindian languages and customs, married the daughter of the grand chief of the Abenakis around 1680,



and himself became an Abenaki war chief. In May 1690, Saint-Castin, followed by his faithful Amerindian warriors, joined Commandant Portneuf's expedition against Casco, one of the three sites besieged by the French in reprisal for the massacre of Lachine. In May 1692, the French and Abenakis together repulsed an English attack on Fort Naxouat (today Fredericton, New Brunswick).

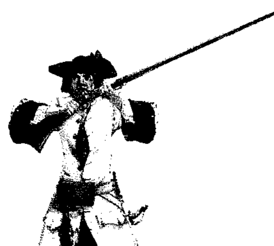
The first contingent of naval troops to be sent to Newfoundland landed in Placentia in 1687. As in Acadia, it was a small force comprising 21 soldiers, one drummer, two corporals and a sergeant, commanded by Lieutenant Louis Pastour de Costabelle.[124] In this very isolated location, the soldiers devoted most of their spare time to the construction of fortifications and to coastal fishing. However this work, though often punctuated with alerts and enemy attacks, did not suffice to keep the troops occupied, and their isolation had harmful effects. In addition, they were often poorly paid and badly nourished. As a result, there were a few attempts at desertion.

Soldier from Gibbon's Regiment in Newfoundland, 1697-98, the first regular British army unit to be stationed in Canada. Noteworthy on the English musket of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries is the "dog lock," a kind of small safety catch attached to the gun lock to hold the hammer. Reconstitution by G.A. Embleton. Canadian Department of National Defence.

As the main base of French vessels exploiting the Newfoundland fishery, Placentia did not escape attack by the privateers and buccaneers of the era who scoured the seas and devastated the coasts. In February 1690, English pirates seized and pillaged Placentia after killing two soldiers of the garrison and wounding an officer. Reinforcements were sent out the following year, so that when two further attacks came in August and September 1691, the garrison was able to repulse them. Thanks to all the work done by the soldiers, Placentia had become quite well fortified by 1692, and all future attempts to take it would fail. For instance, 19 English ships attacked in late August 1693, only to be forced to retreat by the French cannon fire.

In 1696, French power radiated throughout the maritime colonies, both in Acadia, where a second naval company bolstered the territorial defence, and in Newfoundland, where a strategic turning point was reached. However, it was due mostly to the arrival of a remarkable Canadian, Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville, that France managed to score so many points in the Atlantic region.

Back from Hudson Bay, where he had already sown terror among the English, d'Iberville first helped the French in Acadia with their attacks on settlements in Maine. With the assistance of the small naval force under his command and 240 Abenaki warriors, he captured the town of Pemaquid in 1696. Then d'Iberville set sail for Newfoundland where the French, exasperated with all the English attacks and now feeling strong enough to mount assaults of their own, completely turned the strategic tables on their adversaries. Adopting Placentia as the land base for their attacks, they managed to put the English on the defensive.



Drummer of the Compagnies franches de la Marine of Acadia and Plaisance, between 1701 and 1713. Reconstitution by Francis Back.
Canadian Parks Service.

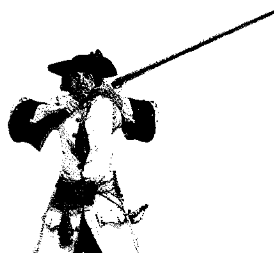
Their tactics were crowned with success, and during the following years they captured St. John's, the English capital of Newfoundland, on three separate occasions.

The first French assault on this town took place in August 1696, but it was repulsed. Taking part in the attack was a recently raised militia company from Placentia. On the following December 30, d'Iberville and Governor Brouillan's forces succeeded in seizing the port. D'Iberville continued his course in 1697, wreaking havoc throughout the English part of the island by destroying 27 of 29 posts, with about 125 Canadian volunteers who had accompanied him and 40 Amerindians from Acadia who joined them. At the same time, the Acadians beat back another attack on Fort Naxouat, after a two-day exchange of artillery fire.

The devastating French raids in Newfoundland in 1696 and 1697 shook the authorities in London out of their torpor. Throughout almost the entire seventeenth century, they had left the settlements in Newfoundland undefended by regular soldiers, even though colonists had been living there since the end of the previous century. The extent of the disaster now prompted them to dispatch a regiment of regular troops and a detachment of artillery to retake the English settlements. Colonel Gibbon's regiment was selected for this task. It consisted of 760 soldiers, who set sail on 13 ships. When the fleet arrived in St. John's in June 1697, the French had departed, leaving nothing but ruins. Assisted by 400 sailors from the fleet, the soldiers set to work building fortifications, a task which proved extremely arduous "because of the solidity of the rock, which [destroyed their] tools faster than [they could] replace them."[125]

Nevertheless, under the direction of the engineer, Richards, a fort and artillery batteries were firmly in place by early September. The men were exhausted from their labours, and part of the regiment returned to England with the fleet. However, a large detachment remained in St. John's: 263 soldiers and officers of Gibbon's Regiment, two engineers and nine workers specialized in engineering, as well as two artillery officers and 17 artillerymen. This garrison was soon judged too large, however, and the next spring, the king recalled his soldiers. Fifty men were left to guard the fort and its batteries, gathered into an independent infantry company commanded by a lieutenant and an ensign, as well as a detachment of seven artillerymen.

In 1697, the English colonies in Newfoundland found themselves without a governor. At the same time that the king ordered

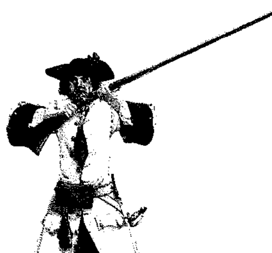


a reduction in the garrison, he decreed that the commanding officer of the warships escorting the annual convoy of fishing vessels to St. John's should serve as governor and commander of the troops during his stay in Newfoundland. Therefore, from 1698 until the end of the eighteenth century, the island was administered by a commodore or admiral of the Royal Navy from on board his ship. There was nothing surprising about this. When colonization began, autocratic military governments were as firmly established in the English colonies as in the French ones. The British colonies of Newfoundland and Nova Scotia were governed by soldiers and did not have legislative assemblies like those to the south. All that existed was a council consisting of a few officers and persons of distinction, presided over by the governor, who was always a high-ranking officer. A legislative assembly would not be established in Nova Scotia until the mid-eighteenth century.

The War of Spanish Succession

The Treaty of Ryswick, signed in 1697, brought a few years of respite before the War of Spanish Succession broke out in 1702. When it was declared, Acadia was quite well defended by four Compagnies franches de la Marine, each comprising 50 men. Artillery was provided by a gunner detached from the Company of Bombardiers de la Marine of Rochefort. Governor Subercase apparently trained a few soldiers, because in 1702 he announced that a squad of 12 gunners had been formed, selected from the best soldiers in the four companies, who "had done perfectly well."[126] Three years later in Newfoundland, this same energetic governor imposed stricter discipline on the soldiers and officers of Placentia, and required that they adhere more closely to the regulations. These steps, appealing to military pride, improved the bearing and morale of the troops. Finally, there were several militia companies in Newfoundland, as indicated by the presence of a major and a militia staff on the island. Some militiamen were temporary, having been recruited among the sailors in Placentia for the season. Thus in 1704, some 300 Basques deemed fit to bear arms were equipped in the Canadian way, "that is to say, deerstalker hats on their heads, guns, powder horns, lead shot sacks slung over their shoulders, and snowshoes on their feet,"[127] and sent off to attack St. John's. The French bastion in both Acadia and Newfoundland was thus strong, and the effects of this military might were soon felt.

Insofar as the English were concerned, the independent company left in St. John's that had been increased to 100 men in 1701, fell back again to half this many four years later. In addition, the company was poorly supplied and lacked uniforms. It was a badly chosen time to reduce the strength of the garrison, because the French had been reinforced by 72 Canadian volunteers from Quebec and 30 Micmac allies in November 1704, after the Bonavista attack. Leaving Placentia, the French crossed Bonavista and, in February 1705, seized the town of St. John's, although they failed to take the fort when its gallant little garrison fought them to a standstill over more than a month. After thus capturing the English capital of Newfoundland for a second time, during the War of Spanish Succession, the Canadian



and Amerindian volunteers took to the seas once again, becoming buccaneers. They returned to St. John's in 1709 for a third and decisive attack on the capital.

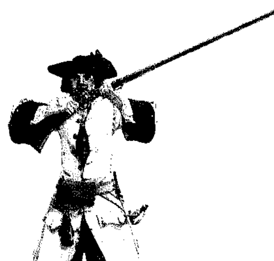
Beginning in 1708, English ships tightened the blockade around Placentia, but this did nothing to protect their positions from the island's interior. In January 1709, an expedition of 170 men composed of the same contingent of Canadian and Micmac volunteers, in addition to naval troops, captured St. John's once again. This time, they overwhelmed the fort and destroyed all the fortifications. The garrison was taken prisoner and shipped to France.

Soldier of the British independent companies in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, between 1698 and 1717. Reconstitution by G.A. Embleton. Canadian Department of National Defence.

The Attack on Acadia

At the same time, the English colonists in Massachusetts, who were being subjected to the depredations of French privateers based at Port-Royal, decided to invade Acadia. In July 1704, more than 500 Bostonians mounted a first attack on Port-Royal, which ended in failure after 18 days of seige. In May 1707, a second attack was launched. This time the French garrison saw about 25 sails rise over the horizon, on ships bearing more than 1,600 men! Repulsed again after only a few days, the Bostonians returned in August. Once more, however, they were thrown back by the French and Abenakis, provoking a "political scandal"[128] in Boston.

Unable to overcome the French resistance alone, the New Englanders requested assistance from the mother country and obtained the help of the Royal Navy. On September 24, 1710, 36 ships with 3,600 men aboard laid siege to Port-Royal. These troops included a battalion of marines numbering 600 regular soldiers, formed of detachments from the regiments of Colonels Holt, Will, Bar, Shannon, and Churchill. Also participating were 1,500 colonial volunteers divided into five regiments, two of which came from Massachusetts and one each from Connecticut, New Hampshire and Rhode Island. This time, the attacking forces enjoyed such an overwhelming advantage in numbers that the approximately 150 French soldiers realized that all was lost, despite their previous heroism. Some even attempted to desert. Nevertheless, the garrison held out until October 13, when Governor Subercase capitulated with the honours of war. Thus ended French rule over Acadia. Port-Royal became Annapolis Royal and the 149 soldiers and officers of the French garrison were sent back to France beginning in late October. The Acadians who had served as auxiliaries to the regular forces were disarmed, and the militia was abolished. The location was then taken over by detachments from the British regiments.



The End

By signing the Treaty of Utrecht on April 11, 1713, France abandoned all claims to Newfoundland and Acadia, although the boundaries were not clearly defined. The evacuation of French soldiers and civilians from Placentia was completed on September 25, 1714. They were sent to Île Royale (Cape Breton Island), where France hoped to establish a new colony. Today, the exploits of the French soldiers who defended Newfoundland are largely forgotten. Though decried as mutineers and deserters, they were extraordinarily successful at their main occupation and reason for being there: waging war. When defeated, they had returned swiftly with their Amerindian allies to spread consternation among their enemies, who were almost always superior to them in numbers and equipment.

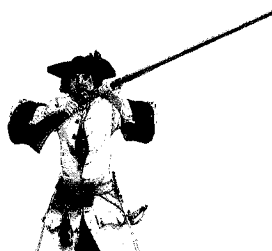
The English created four independent companies for the specific purpose of guarding Newfoundland, for which they had suffered such losses. In theory, each company consisted of three officers and 88 soldiers, although in reality there were only 40 soldiers per company. A detachment of artillerymen accompanied the infantry, and the troops arrived in Placentia in May 1714 to replace the French garrison. It was decided not to detach any soldiers to St. John's but to post them all to Placentia, where they were subsequently all but forgotten, provided only with wooden shoes and barely enough clothing.

Insofar as Acadia was concerned, it became Nova Scotia and the Acadians British subjects, beginning a new page in their history, in which they would have to consider themselves neutral.

Louisbourg

France was not totally ousted from its possessions on the Atlantic by the Treaty of Utrecht because it maintained its sovereignty over Île Saint-Jean (now Prince Edward Island) and Cape Breton Island, which was officially renamed Île Royale. In 1713, the four companies from Acadia were united with the three from Placentia to form the Compagnies franches de la Marine of Île Royale. Each comprised three officers and 50 soldiers. This number increased later, but as in other cases, full strength was rarely achieved because recruits were hard to find.

From a strategic point of view, Île Royale was better located than Île Saint-Jean. It was therefore decided to locate the new colony here, including a large military port to protect fishing and merchant vessels. In 1719, Louisbourg was chosen as the site of a naval base and a strongly fortified port. Although a prosperous little French colony, living essentially from fishing and agriculture, remained on Île Saint-Jean and in a few other small settlements on Île Royale, most of the French colony on the Atlantic was henceforth concentrated at Louisbourg. As the years passed, massive fortifications were built, and the vast majority of troops on Île Royale came to be stationed at Louisbourg. The garrison included not only Frenchmen but also, eventually, Swiss mercenaries.



Sailor and officers of the French Navy, between 1680 and 1690. Alfred de Marbot. Engraving.
Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence.

The French and British Navies

Although concerned above all with its eastern borders, France needed to defend its Atlantic and Mediterranean coasts as well. Warships were required to ensure the safety of its trade and fisheries. During the 1620s and 1630s, Cardinal Richelieu developed a powerful fleet under Louis XIII. However, the fleet was neglected and it numbered only a few ships when Louis XIV assumed power. A vast program was undertaken under the direction of Jean-Baptiste Colbert to build more than 100 warships and about 60 frigates and fire-ships. The powerful French navy could then claim to rule the seas.

Great Britain was also a leading naval power at the time. As an island, it was safe from invasion so long as its navy was powerful enough to repulse any attempted landing. This was the fundamental principle on which all British military planning was based. Very few fortifications were ever built in England, and the army was only modest in size. The lion's share of military spending was devoted to the Royal Navy, for the English were well aware that their security depended on having the most powerful navy in the world. During the 1660s, concern arose about the threat posed by Louis XIV's new fleet. It fell to Samuel Pepys, Secretary of the Admiralty, to strengthen and modernize the Royal Navy in order to guarantee British naval supremacy. This he did during the 1670s and 1680s.

The great confrontation between the British and French fleets arose during the war of the League of Augsburg (1689-97). In 1690, the French Navy succeeded temporarily in seizing control of the English Channel and dominating the coasts of England. Two years later, however, the French fleet was defeated at La Hougue, and never fully recovered from this disaster.

Nevertheless, the French Navy remained a formidable force for the rest of Louis XIV's reign, preventing the English from taking total control of the seas. Under Louis XV, however, the decline of the French Navy continued, while the Royal Navy grew ever more powerful. The British took draconian measures to augment the size of the fleet, improve the quality of the crews, and improve discipline. By 1755, the Royal Navy numbered 140 ships of the line. Meanwhile, the French Navy was starved for money. It managed to remain a leader in naval sciences, but its crews were poorly trained and it had only 60 ships of the line at the outbreak of the Seven Years' War.

The British Colonies

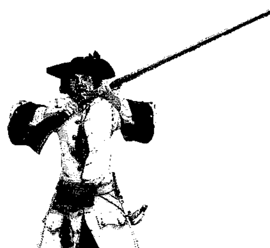
The British colonies that emerged in the seventeenth century around the periphery of New France, in what is now Canada, were very different from their American neighbours. These settlements were small with tiny populations, living primarily from the sea. After the capture of Port-Royal, Great Britain maintained relatively large garrisons in the Atlantic region, and especially in Nova Scotia, because of the interest which France continued to show in its natural resources and strategic advantages. In 1713, four independent companies were stationed here, each consisting of three officers and 88 soldiers, including the various detachments posted to Annapolis Royal in 1710. Two years later, the strength of each company had fallen to 60 because of deaths and desertion.

Another reason for maintaining strong garrisons in this region was the difficulty in organizing militias. After the capture of Port-Royal, the population living in the conquered region was largely Acadian. The presence of these neutral Frenchmen in an English colony was a constant source of concern for the British authorities, who feared an uprising. There was certainly no thought of arming and providing military organization to people who might turn their weapons against Britain at the first opportunity. As a result, only colonists of British or American ancestry could become militiamen. In the early seventeenth century, the first Anglo-Scottish settlements had developed a sort of militia. The French who captured Fort Rosemar on Cape Breton in 1629 found 15 men armed with harquebuses and wearing burgonet helmets and cuirasses with arm-guards and thigh-pieces. Other defenders were armed with muskets and pikes. These men were clearly just as much colonists as soldiers. After 1713, the militia in this fairly modest and rudimentary colony was not given any formal military organization until 1720, when the governor

Artilleryman of the "Board of Ordnance" detachment, between 1700 and 1716. The garrisons of British forts in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia included these gunners from the regular army.
Reconstitution by G.A. Embleton.
Canadian Department of National Defence.

issued two captain's commissions. The merchants of the area were then organized into two companies. However, their duties were apparently not solely military, because the captains were also law officers. This militia disappeared without leaving a trace.

Besides the Acadian problem, the conquerors of Port-Royal faced another major difficulty: the virtually incessant hostility of the Abenaki and Micmac Amerindians, who continually harassed the garrison. In order to deal with these guerilla attacks, the British even raised a company of



Iroquois rangers. When the 56 Mohawks, commanded by two white officers, arrived at Annapolis in 1712, they were each given a blanket and a gun. Operating practically independently of the other troops, they camped outside the fort. Very familiar with warfare in the woods, the Mohawks made good rangers, causing difficulty for the Amerindians allied with the French as well as for deserters from the British garrison, whom they hunted down. After a year, however, several of these Mohawks "deserted" to return home. In May 1713, the governor sent the remainder to Boston, where the unit was disbanded.

In 1717, the British decided to create a new regiment to stand guard in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, incorporating into it the four independent companies already posted to these locations. This would become the 40th Infantry Regiment, identified by a red and buff-coloured uniform. Led by Colonel Phillips, it included one grenadier company and nine fusilier companies, in all 33 officers and 400 soldiers. This one infantry regiment was larger than the entire garrison in Jamaica prior to the 1740s!

Since this beautiful island in the West Indies was economically more important at the time and surrounded by generally hostile Spanish colonies, as well as by pirates, senior officials in Great Britain must have recognized the strategic value of

Sergeant of the Compagnies franches de la Marine of Acadia and Plaisance, between 1701 and 1713. Reconstitution by Francis Back.

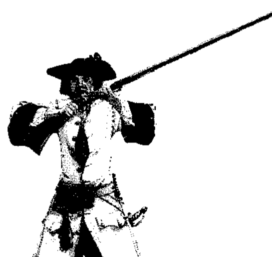
Canadian Parks Service.

Nova Scotia. Of the ten companies in the regiment, five were posted to Placentia and five, including the grenadiers, to Annapolis, where the regiment had its headquarters. After the Amerindians laid seige to Annapolis in 1722, four of the independent companies in Newfoundland were transferred to Canso, leaving only one in Placentia.

The Defence of Île Royale

The French sent some 3,000 soldiers and recruits to Île Royale between 1714 and 1755, but even so, the Compagnies franches de la Marine garrisoned there were generally below strength. The number of soldiers per company rose from 50 in 1713 to 60 (in theory) in 1723. However, the garrison was 50 soldiers short in 1719, and almost 100 short two years later. In order to bolster the garrison, a royal decree dated May 12, 1722 ordered that a detachment of 50 officers and soldiers from Karrer's Swiss Regiment be sent to Louisbourg.

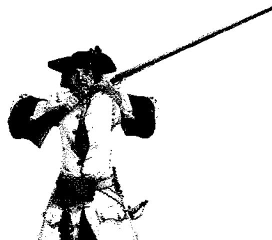
This regiment was created on December 15, 1719 when King Louis XV granted François-Adam Karrer, an officer from Soleure, Switzerland who was a veteran of Swiss regiments in the service of France, the right to recruit a corps of three companies numbering 200 men each. All Swiss regiments raised under a contract (called a capitulation) between the king and their colonels enjoyed a certain amount of independence in regard to their management and



military justice. Under the terms of such agreements, the colonels who owned the regiments rented them to the king at a certain price covering the pay of the mercenary soldiers and officers, their weapons and clothing, as well as a profit. The regiments bore the names of their colonels and all the officers had to be Swiss. The nationality of the soldiers did not matter much, as long as they were recruited by Swiss. Therefore, there were Germans, Eastern Europeans, and Scandinavians among them, some Protestant and some not. However, all foreign regiments in the service of France were strictly forbidden to recruit "French soldiers," as the Prince of Bourbon had to "explain"[129] to Colonel Karrer, who was caught red-handed enlisting Frenchmen in 1723. These troops wore red uniforms and had the right to carry sabres, the weapon of elite infantrymen.

Being a member of the Louisbourg garrison was not particularly pleasant. The climate of Île Royale was damp and cold, and the isolated fortress was often bathed in fog. Service consisted essentially of standing guard, and there was very little to occupy the soldiers' time when they were not doing this or performing drills. As a result, they often spent their spare time building fortifications in order to earn a little bit of extra money. Since it was rarely necessary to send small detachments to Île Saint-Jean or to other small posts on Cape Breton Island, such as Port-Toulouse or Port-Dauphin, the troops hardly ever left Louisbourg. Unlike those serving elsewhere in New France, these troops rarely had an opportunity to prove what they could do on expeditions that might heighten their martial spirit. All this was very damaging to the morale of the French garrison. The Swiss, who accounted for one-fifth of the forces on Île Royale, served primarily in the town of Louisbourg itself. They had their own canteen and washhouse and lived a separate existence from the French soldiers, although there was no hostility between them. Most spoke only German, which explains their lack of social contact with French civilians or soldiers. They were also largely Protestant, which was an important factor at a time when Roman Catholicism was the only officially permitted religion in France and its colonies.

The six Compagnies franches de la Marine on Île Royale were supposed to have 60 soldiers each in 1723, but they were generally short by a total of about 20 to 30 soldiers. The shortage was most acute in 1731, when the garrison was 20 percent below its target numbers. The garrison was bolstered the following year by the arrival of reinforcements and the addition to each company of two aiguillette cadets, who were the sons of officers. In June 1724, the number of Swiss soldiers was increased to 100.



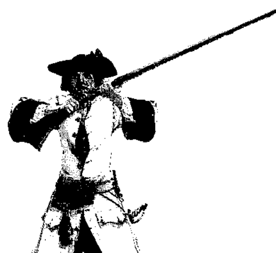
Officer carrying the colonel's colour of Karrer's Swiss Regiment, around 1720.
Bibliothèque nationale, Paris.

The size of the regular garrison at Louisbourg did not encourage the organization of a militia to provide assistance, and the social role which a militia might have played in the Acadian colony was of little importance. The people of Île Royale therefore showed little interest in a militia, and it was not until 1741 that two militia companies of 50 men each were established in the town of Louisbourg.

The 1740s

Although the Louisbourg garrison was generally between 30 and 40 soldiers short, it reached its maximum complement in 1741, with 70 men per company in each of the eight Compagnies franches de la Marine and 150 officers and soldiers in the Karrer Regiment. The large number of artillery pieces on the fortifications eventually required a corps of specialized troops. Therefore, in 1743, Île Royale was authorized to form the first artillery unit in the history of the French colonial army. It was called the Compagnie de canonniers-bombardiers, and initially numbered 30 men.

In May 1744, shortly after the outbreak of the War of Austrian Succession, these troops had an opportunity to prove what they could do, following a long period of inaction. A mixed detachment of French and Swiss soldiers captured the English port of Canso, which was garrisoned by a few companies of the 40th Regiment. In August of the same year, they made a rather feeble attempt to take Annapolis, but were repulsed by the English.



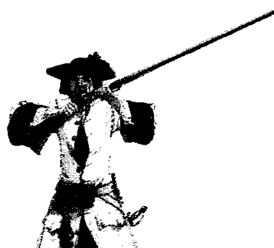
Soldier of Karrer's Swiss Regiment, around 1725. The Swiss and Irish troops in the French service generally wore red uniforms. Reconstitution by Michel Pétard.
Canadian Parks Service.

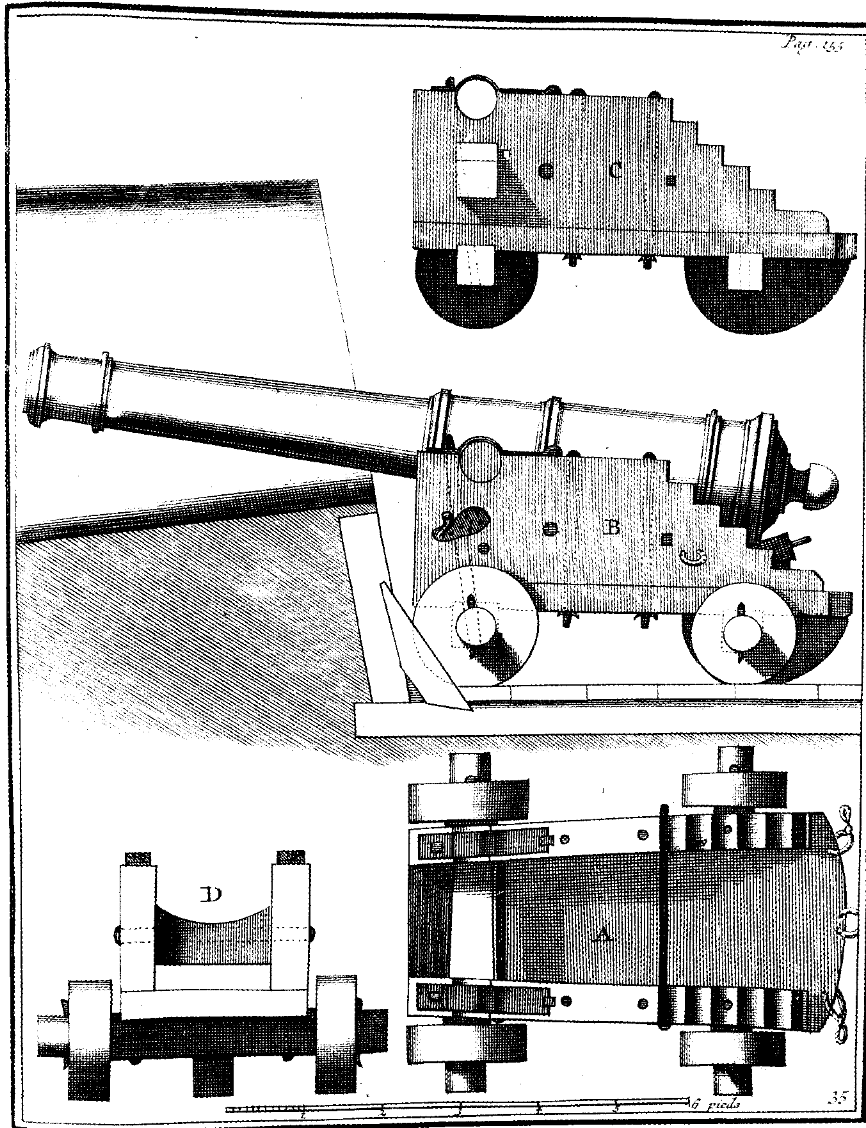
Some internal problems were making themselves felt in Louisbourg, and undermining the effectiveness of the troops. While relations were reasonably good between the ordinary Swiss and French soldiers, the same was not true of their officers, who disagreed about the interpretation of the rights and privileges of the Swiss troops in Louisbourg. In addition, the exploitation of soldiers in the French garrison was worse than that in other colonies. Officers were allowed to control the money earned by ordinary soldiers, both for their regular duties and for the work they performed on the fortifications. The type of commission that the officers retained was not unknown or even illegal in eighteenth-century armies, but the abuses on Île Royale were obvious. The result was what usually happens under such conditions: with the exception of the artillery company, the entire garrison mutinied in 1744.

At dawn on December 27 of that year, drummers of the Swiss regiment suddenly sounded the assembly. The soldiers assembled in the king's bastion, and Ensign Rasser came running to demand an explanation. When he heard their complaints, he rushed to Captain Schönherr, who ordered him to see the garrison major immediately. But other drums began to beat as well! The soldiers of the Compagnies franches de la Marine were joining the Swiss. Almost the entire garrison of Louisbourg took part in the mutiny, with only the sergeants of the Compagnies franches and the Compagnie des canonniers-bombardiers remaining loyal to their oath.

The complaints of the mutineers were reasonable. The Swiss wanted better living conditions. The French made the same demand in addition to complaining about the abuses of certain officers and officials. The soldiers also wanted more wood for heating, better rations, the clothing due to recruits, and the booty to which the soldiers who had participated in the capture of Canso in May were entitled. The commissary, François Bigot, acceded to their demands, while the governor and the officers succeeded in calming the atmosphere. Order was re-established, if not discipline, and no blood was shed as a result of the

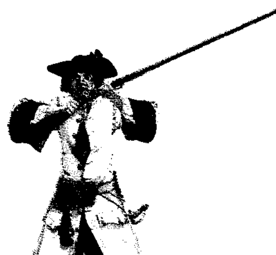
Drummer of Karrer's Swiss Regiment, around 1745. As in all the Swiss regiments in the service of France, the drummers wore the colours of their colonel's livery. Their drums were generally decorated with a flame design of the same colour as the regimental flag. Reconstitution by Francis Back.
Louisbourg Fortress. Canadian Parks Service.





Iron cannon from the naval artillery mounted on a wooden garrison carriage. The platform has a slight incline to minimize the recoil when shots were fired. This piece is representative of the type of artillery found in the forts of New France at the time of Louis XIV and Louis XV.

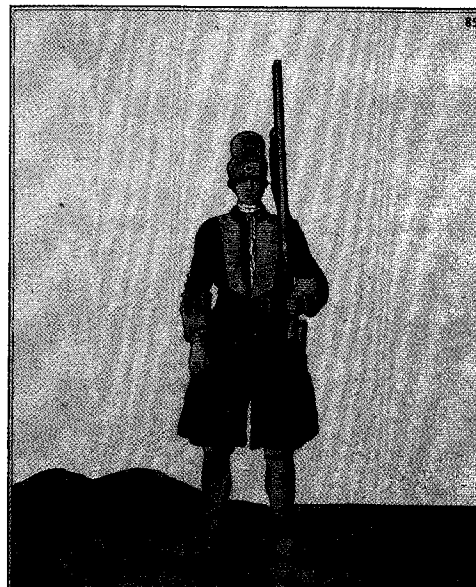
Canadian Parks Service.



mutiny, though some officers were forced at bayonet point to listen to their men's complaints! Although no violence ensued, this mutiny was the largest among the colonial troops of the Ancien Régime. Since the Swiss not only participated in the mutiny, but instigated it, the Karrer detachment was no longer assigned to Louisbourg after 1745.

Insofar as the English were concerned, various line regiments came and went in Nova Scotia. However, the real garrison regiment after the mid-1740s, the equivalent of the Compagnies franches de la Marine in New France, was the 40th Regiment based in Annapolis. Often the governors and lieutenant-governors of the colony were selected from among its senior officers. One of these, Colonel Phillips, was governor from 1717 to 1750. Although some officers obtained land, the British did not promote military colonization similar to that of New France.

An urgent need was again felt by the British in 1744 for a unit of rangers to counter the Abenakis and Micmacs allied with the French. This time, the Iroquois were not called upon, at least in the beginning. Instead, a corps of Nova Scotia Rangers was raised in New England. Two companies were quickly recruited and dispatched to Annapolis in July to reinforce the garrison. In September, a third arrived, led by Captain Joseph Goreham. The latter company was very different from the two others because it was composed primarily of about 60 Mohawks and Métis. Familiar with Amerindian tactics, these men soon provoked skirmishes with the allies of the French. Later, the companies from Massachusetts returned home, leaving Goreham's company in Nova Scotia, where it patrolled primarily in the west and built a few blockhouses.

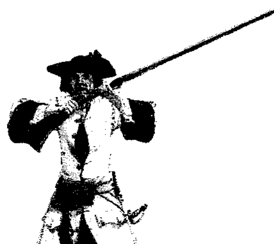


Detachments from ten British marine regiments took part in the capture of Louisbourg in 1745. These elite troops wore mitres with rounded tops on their heads.
Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence.

American Militiamen Take Louisbourg

Around 1740 Louisbourg, with population of about 4,000, was admirably fulfilling the task for which it had been established, namely to provide a large home port for the fishing fleet, and especially for the French merchant fleet. Maritime traffic had

Soldier of the 40th British Infantry Regiment in 1742.
Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence.



Micmac chief around 1740. Reconstitution by Francis Back. Fortress Louisbourg. Canadian Parks Service.

become considerable, and Louisbourg had risen to be the fourth most important port in North America after Boston, New York and Philadelphia. It competed with the shipping of the colonies to the south, threatening Boston.

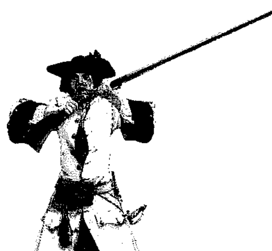
Louisbourg was therefore besieged in 1745 by any army of militiamen from New England, supported by the Royal Navy. Participating in the siege were an artillery corps, seven infantry regiments from Massachusetts, one each from Connecticut and New Hampshire, and three companies from Rhode Island, supported by 800 marines from the Royal Navy. The expedition was led by a New Englander, William Pepperell. From a tactical point of view, the Americans relied on their knowledge of classical European siege warfare in order to take the fortress.

The Americans conducted the attack skillfully and with great determination, while the morale of the French garrison was not very high, partly because of bitterness left over from the mutiny the previous year. Nevertheless, the French held out for a month and a half, from May 1 to June 17, 1745, before they capitulated after a fairly poor defence of the fortress. The troops of Île Royale were nevertheless granted the honours of war and sent back to Rochefort, in France. The success of this operation surprised the Europeans, while the New Englanders overflowed with joy. The British parliament reimbursed them for the £185,000 spent on the expedition, and the king raised Pepperell to the nobility, making him the first American to become a baronet. Most importantly, the capture of Louisbourg demonstrated to the Americans the military strength they could muster when the various colonies acted in unison.

Shortly before the siege of Louisbourg in 1745, the size of the two militia companies in the town was increased to 90 men each, and about nine other companies were raised. Despite their ignorance of military matters – most had never touched a gun before being mobilized – the militiamen from the town acquitted themselves honourably during the siege. The surrender of Louisbourg included Île Saint-Jean, although Lieutenant Duvivier succeeded in repulsing an English landing party with his small garrison of one sergeant and 15 soldiers, before evacuating the island and leaving for Quebec.

The Occupation of Louisbourg and French Attacks

After the surrender of Île Royale in July 1745, the British had a turn at defending Louisbourg. In September, London authorized the raising of two line regiments, the 65th and 66th, formed of American militiamen who had taken part in the siege, to furnish a garrison. Each regiment was supposed to comprise 1,000 men, but since many of the officers' commissions were given to



Britons and most of the militiamen wanted to return home rather than remain in Louisbourg, recruiting men proved to be difficult. The arrival in Louisbourg of the 29th, 30th and 45th Regiments in April 1746 gave the impression, for the time being, that the fortress was well defended.

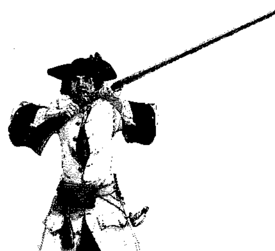
That same year, a fleet was organized in France under the command of the Duc d'Anville to recapture Louisbourg. On board were two battalions of the Ponthieu Regiment, two battalions of the royal militia, and one battalion of the Compagnies franches de la Marine, as well as some artillery. However, the expedition met with great misfortune. Storms separated the ships, and sickness broke out, decimating soldiers and sailors. The Duc d'Anville died of apoplexy and his successor attempted suicide. Those who survived took refuge at Chebucto Bay before sailing back to France, where they arrived in a pitiful state.

Other large expeditions set out from Canada. In 1746, Governor General Beauharnois sent a powerful force of 680 militiamen to Acadia, supported by a number of soldiers from the Compagnies franches de la Marine, to offset the negative effects of the capture of Louisbourg. They arrived in July near Beaubassin, north of the Bay of Fundy. They received the support of Abbé Le Loutre, a missionary to the Amerindians, and occupied the Isthmus of Chignecto.

The Americans were not at all pleased that the isthmus had fallen under French control, and they sent a Massachusetts regiment commanded by Colonel Noble to occupy Grand-Pré and the surrounding area. Commandant Ramezay ordered Captain Coulon de Villiers to dislodge them. De Villiers first mounted a raid on Cobequid (today Truro, Nova Scotia) in January 1747, and then he surrounded Grand-Pré with 300 men, including about 50 Amerindians. On the night of February 12, at around three o'clock in the morning, ten detachments slipped into Grand-Pré and simultaneously attacked the Americans, who were overcome after a few minutes of confused fighting in the darkness. Colonel Noble was killed, and the garrison surrendered. It was rendered the honours of war and sent to Annapolis, while Villiers and his men retired to the north.

Micmac warrior, around 1740. Reconstitution by Francis Back.
Fortress Louisbourg. Canadian Parks Service.

Meanwhile, discontent was growing among the English troops at Louisbourg. When a deduction from their pay was announced in the summer of 1747, a general mutiny erupted. The entire garrison laid down its arms and began a hunger strike. The authorities had no other choice than to revoke the deduction, hoping that the troops would fight if Louisbourg were attacked by the French. Most of all,



it was hoped that the War of Austrian Succession would come to an end. It did end the next year, but Louisbourg was returned to France by the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle.

Elsewhere, Goreham's company continued to prove very useful, patrolling the territory. In 1747, its strength was increased to 100 men. Two years later, a second company of equal strength and a third of 50 men were raised among colonists in Nova Scotia. On the eve of the Seven Years' War, a French report estimated that the corps consisted of 120 men, including "some Maringhams" (possibly Mohicans), "who [their] men despise[d], as well as riffraff from every country." Dressed in grey with small leather caps, they were used to "comb the woods."[130] Despite the "riffraff" they included – an understandable opinion on the part of their adversaries – Goreham's Rangers were considered by the British to be very effective, and

Canonniers-bombarders manoeuvring an artillery piece into place, in the mid-eighteenth century. The men serving the cannon are wearing their waistcoats so that they will not be hampered by their coats and equipment. Sergeants and corporals can be recognized by the silver lace stitched to their cuffs, double lace for the former and single lace for the latter. The drummers are wearing the king's livery with buttons of white metal. The officers' uniforms are identical to those of their men, but of better quality. Reconstitution by Eugène Lelièpvre.
Canadian Parks Service.

this company formed the core of a battalion of North American Rangers raised during the Seven Years' War.

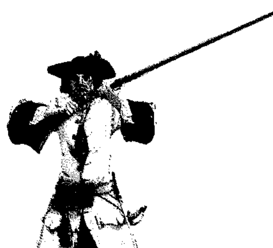
Finally, there is an administrative detail that is important in its own way. Although the Nova Scotia Rangers were raised in 1744 by order of the legislative assembly of Massachusetts, England gave its approval and provided financing. Three years after this decision, Captain Goreham received a royal commission and the company was paid out of the British treasury. As a result, this corps, constituted largely of Amerindians and Métis, was henceforth part of the regular British army. This meant that the Nova Scotia Rangers were the first regular corps raised in the British colonies in Canada.

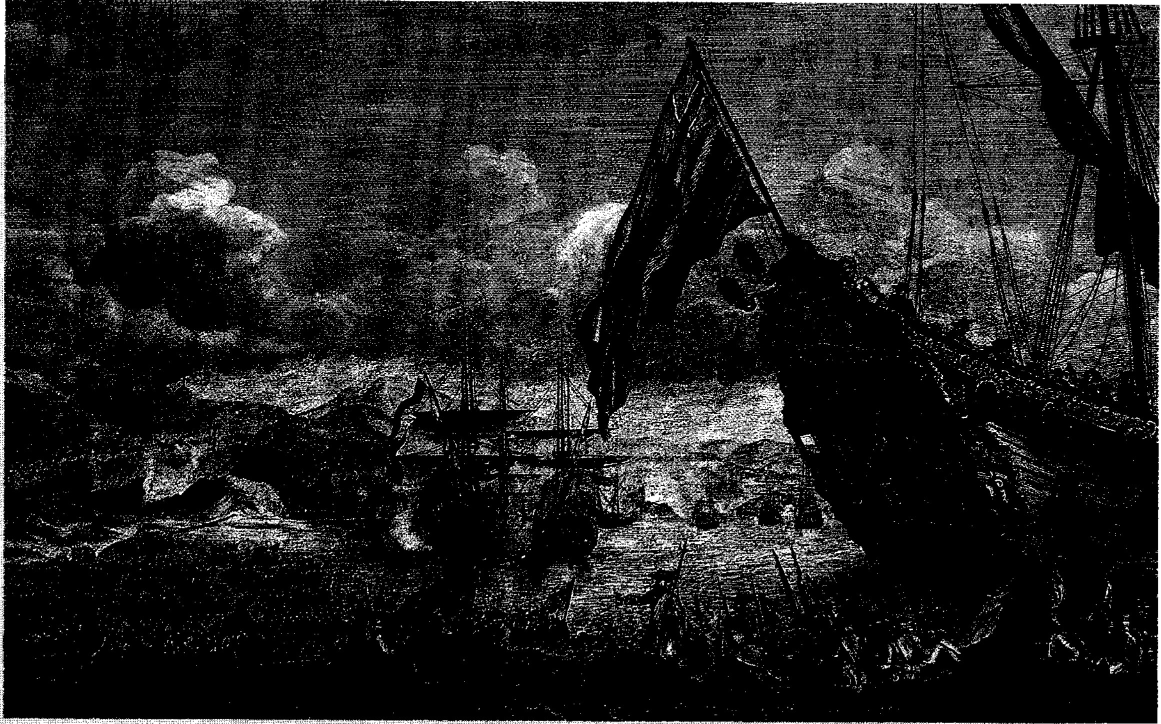
Île Royale Is Returned to France

In 1747 the Compagnies Franches of Île Royale (those that had been sent to Rochefort, France) were dispatched to Quebec to reinforce the town's garrison. When Louisbourg was returned to France in 1749 by the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, these troops, bolstered by 16 additional companies, returned to the fortress that had been their base. Once again, reported Intendant Bigot in 1750, "the soldiers of Île Royale, finding themselves in a foul, frightful land and confined in one place, [were] bored and their minds [were] occupied only with treachery."[131] In order to relieve some of the isolation of the troops, the general staff suggested that a few companies from Île Royale be rotated with others from Canada. This measure was adopted in 1752, and thereafter two companies were expected to replace one another every two years. However, this "did not please everyone"[132] in Canada, and the idea was probably

View of Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia, around 1753. John Hamilton. Water-colour.
National Archives of Canada (C2706).

Soldier of the 40th British infantry regiment, around 1745. For ordinary service, English soldiers wore brown gaiters instead of white, which easily got dirty. When the weather was chilly, they unhooked the turnbacks of their coats to cover their thighs and buttoned the lapels across the chest. Reconstitution by G.A. Embleton.
Canadian Parks Service.

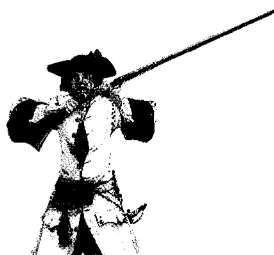




Troops from New England, supported by the British Navy, land at Louisbourg in 1745. Painting by J. Stevens, engraved by Brooks.
National Archives of Canada (C10994).

abandoned just before of the Seven Years' War. Instead, more rigorous discipline became the main method of improving the situation at Louisbourg.

This task was accomplished by Michel Lecomtois de Surlaville, who arrived in 1751 as major of the garrison. He observed that the ranks were "poorly aligned, [that] some soldiers didn't even know how to handle their guns properly," and that they talked among themselves. March-pasts "lacked any fixed rules"; the soldiers bore their arms any way they liked; and their hair was "not at all or poorly attached" in a queue. Their weapons and equipment were in disarray, and their clothing was "filthy and worn." A former colonel of the Grenadiers de France, Surlaville showed how displeased he was at this state of affairs. Officers were required to wear their uniforms and provide an example of good discipline. Sergeants had to spend time with their men and share their meals, while cadets were warned not to be absent from drills. The soldiers were expected to be in their barracks, to be clean, and to "comb and attach their hair." Surlaville greatly increased the number of drills, and noted some progress[133] after a few weeks. The regime he enforced, based on the idea that in isolated garrisons, strict but fair discipline made soldiers feel proud and hardened them to military life, had not previously been much in evidence on Île Royale. When Surlaville departed from Louisbourg in 1754, he left behind a well-disciplined garrison accustomed to military exercises and with a strong esprit de corps.

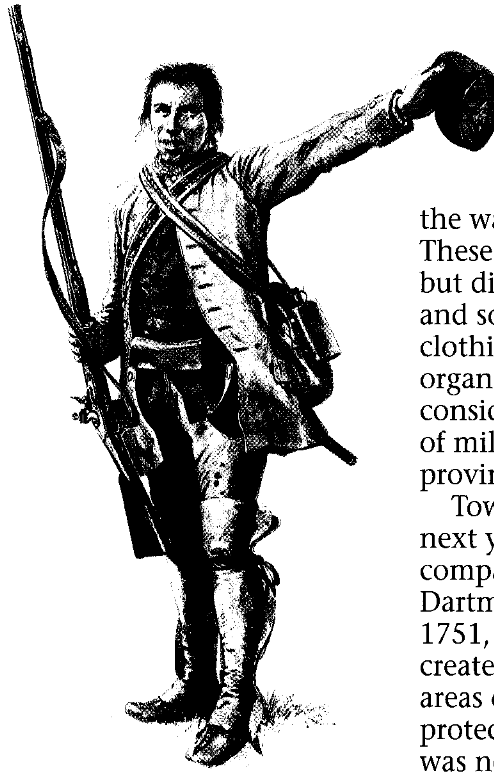


Halifax, Key to the Atlantic

Having lost Louisbourg, the British authorities had decided to establish a strong naval and military base in Nova Scotia. In 1749, they founded the town of Halifax and major works began. From the point of view of naval strategy, or strategy in general, this was certainly one of the wisest decisions ever made in the history of Canada or of Great Britain. Halifax is the key to the North Atlantic, and today remains the largest naval base in Canada.

In May 1749, the 65th and 66th Regiments were disbanded, and three British regiments, the 29th, 30th and 45th, were transferred to the new town. The 40th Regiment established its headquarters there, as did an artillery detachment.

The arrival of more than 1,300 colonists in Halifax in 1749 soon led to the establishment of a militia. On December 10, all the men in the city aged 16 to 60 and fit to bear arms assembled on the parade ground, where officers were appointed. Ten infantry companies were formed, each commanded by two officers and consisting of 70 to 80 men, as well as a company of artificers to assist the regular army engineers.



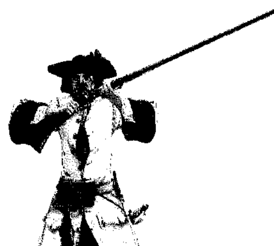
Soldier of the Nova Scotia Rangers, around 1750. Reconstitution by G.A. Embleton.

Canadian Department of National Defence.

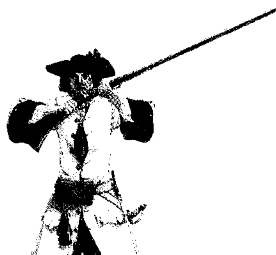
These companies were required to drill with their weapons every week. Those who were absent had to pay a fine and could even be imprisoned. Discipline was strict; a sergeant was once given 20 lashes for insulting his captain! Duties consisted of helping in the construction of fortifications and taking turns standing guard. A detachment of 150 militiamen was assigned to the watch each night. These men were armed, but did not have uniforms and so wore their civilian clothing. This solid organization could be considered the real origin of militias in the Maritime provinces.

Toward the end of the next year, another militia company was formed in Dartmouth, and in June 1751, two others were created in the outlying areas of Halifax. The protection they afforded was necessary because of skirmishes with Amerindians who were always lurking near the British settlements. On March 22, 1753, Governor Peregrine Hopson, who was also Colonel of the 29th Regiment, required all British subjects throughout the province to form militias, including the new German colonists who formed the Lunnenburg battalion.

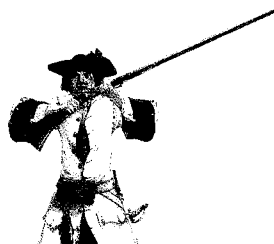
A paid naval militia also saw the light of day in 1749. It served on board small ships protecting coastal trade from sea raids by Micmacs, ensuring communications, and carrying provisions from Halifax to detachments posted to the ports of Annapolis, Pizquid, Grand-Pré and Canso. These ships and their



Panoramic view of Louisbourg in August 1744. In the background, the lighthouse is visible at the entrance to the port and a cloud of smoke arises from a careened ship. Reconstitution by Lewis Parker.
Fortress Louisbourg. Canadian Parks Service.



View of the port and town of Louisbourg in August 1744. The large building in the background is the king's bastion barracks. Soldiers lived in the right wing, while the governor's quarters and Saint-Louis chapel were in the left wing. Reconstitution by Lewis Parker.
Fortress Louisbourg. Canadian Parks Service.



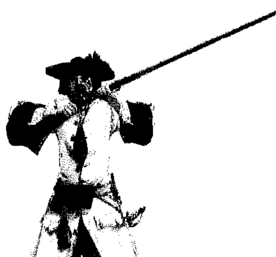
crews, enlisted by the governor, formed a kind of small, temporary provincial navy. The ships *Ulysses, New Casco, Dove, Yorke* and *Warren* served from 1749 to 1755, while a few others saw duty for shorter periods. These small ships, about 30 metres in length and weighing about 90 tons, were armed with small pieces of artillery. The naval militia disappeared with the declaration of the Seven Years' War in 1756, when the Royal Navy assumed responsibility for all naval defence.

French Dominance of Chignecto

Although English soldiers and militias succeeded in ensuring the defence of the settlements on the coast and much of the sea front, they could not stop raids by large French expeditions from Canada on the Nova Scotia border or break the French hold over the Isthmus of Chignecto. The peace of 1748 revived British claims that their territory included this isthmus and all Acadian settlements in what is now New Brunswick. The French maintained regular troops and Canadian militiamen west of the Missiquash River, while the British remained east of this unofficial but very real boundary. In early 1751, the French built Forts Gaspereau and Beauséjour to counterbalance Fort Lawrence, built by the British in October 1750. The situation remained tense and small incidents were frequent, although a certain stability reigned, at least for a few years.

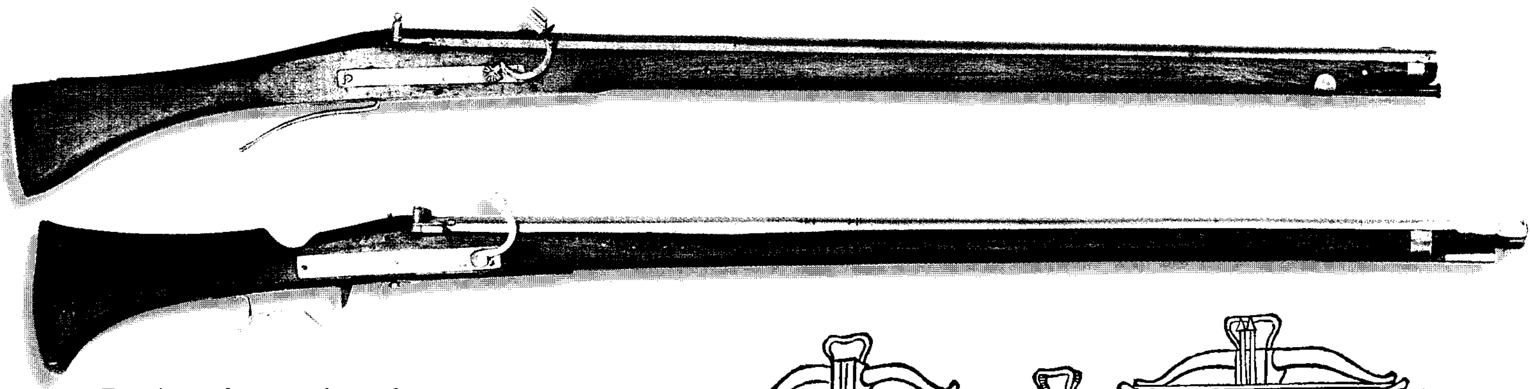
The Future of Louisbourg

Louisbourg remained the strategic centre of French maritime activity. However, its population was only 4,000, with 1,700 soldiers available to defend it. The colonies to the south, on the other hand, now had the support of the Royal Navy and their militias were becoming ever larger and better trained. The recent founding of Halifax, which would become a powerful naval base, confirmed Britain's determination to control maritime traffic along the Atlantic coast. The balance of forces between the English and French was changing rapidly, and Louisbourg's geopolitical position made it an inescapable target.

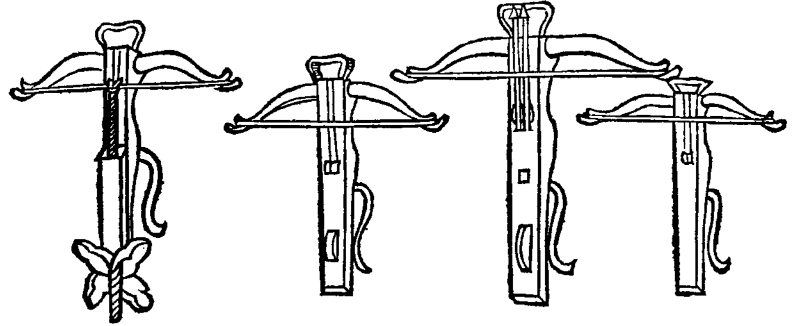


ARMS

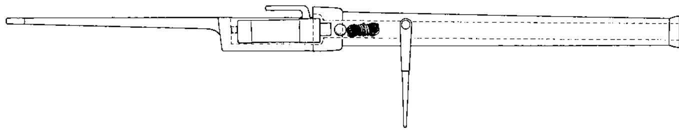
Matchlock musket, around 1665. Canadian Parks Service.

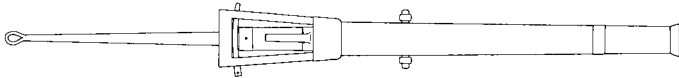


Two sixteenth-century harquebuses. Former collection of the historian Harold L. Peterson.

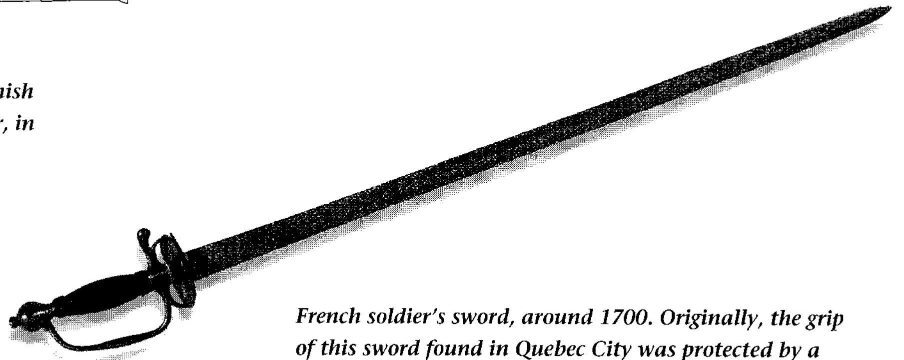


Various kinds of crossbows, shown in an engraving dated 1534. Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence.

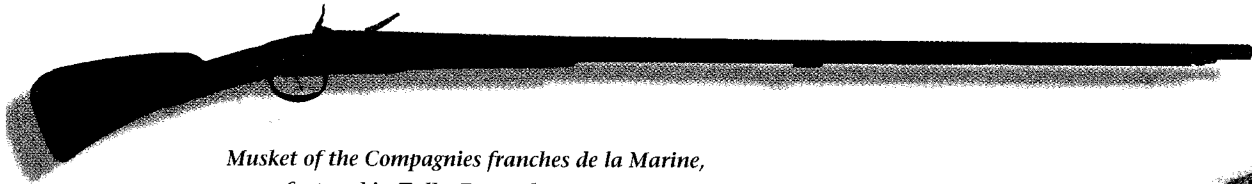




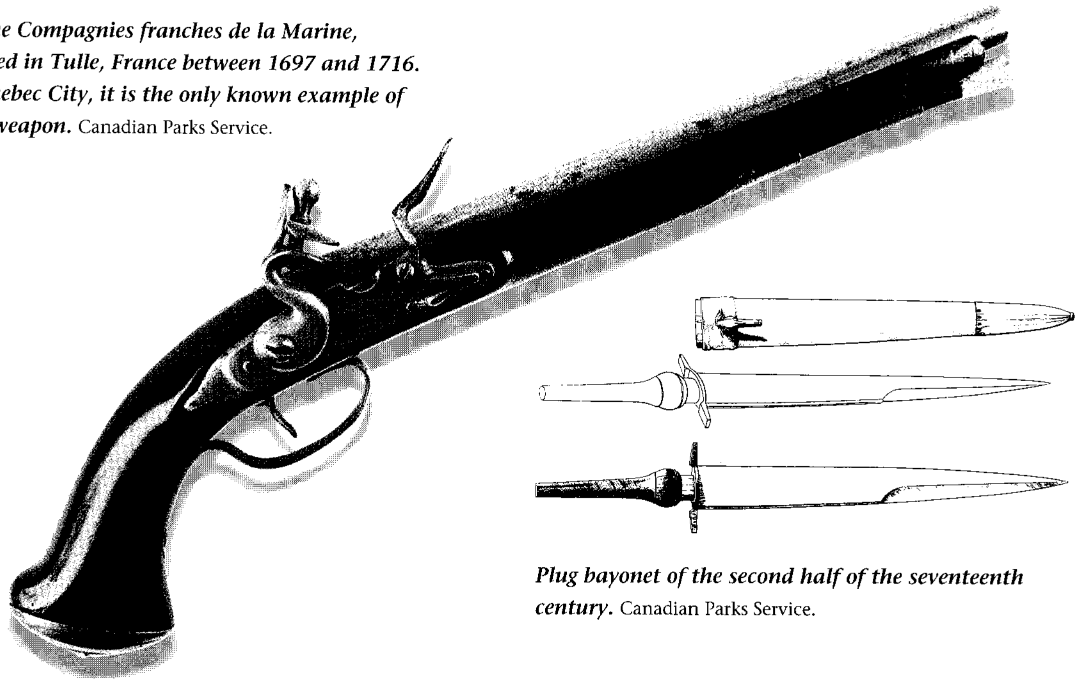
A swivel gun or small-calibre cannon from the Spanish galleon* San Juan, *which sank in Red Bay, Labrador, in 1565. Reconstitution by Carol Piper. Canadian Parks Service.



French soldier's sword, around 1700. Originally, the grip of this sword found in Quebec City was protected by a covering of brass wire. Canadian Parks Service.

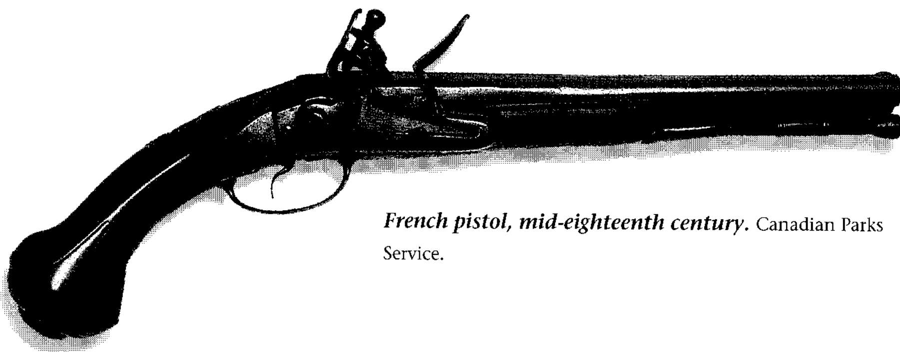


Musket of the Compagnies franches de la Marine, manufactured in Tulle, France between 1697 and 1716. Found in Quebec City, it is the only known example of this type of weapon. Canadian Parks Service.



Pistol of the mid-seventeenth century. Canadian Parks Service.

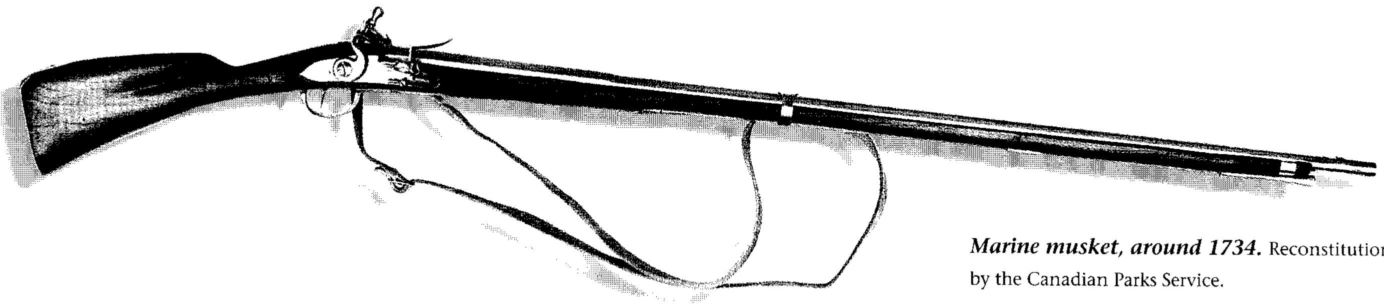
Plug bayonet of the second half of the seventeenth century. Canadian Parks Service.



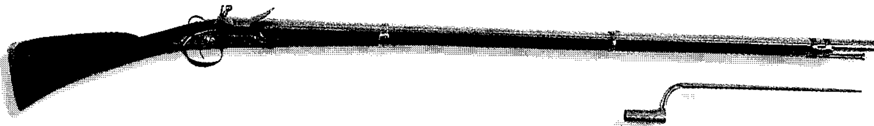
French pistol, mid-eighteenth century. Canadian Parks Service.

Sword of a French officer, model used from the late seventeenth to the mid-eighteenth century. Canadian Parks Service.

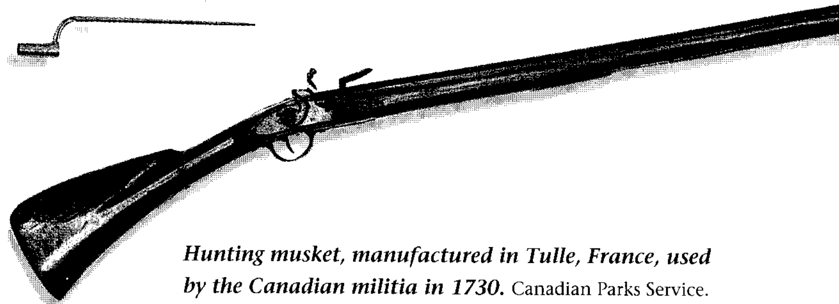
Head of a sergeant's halberd, used by French troops between 1715 and 1758. Canadian Parks Service.



Marine musket, around 1734. Reconstitution by the Canadian Parks Service.

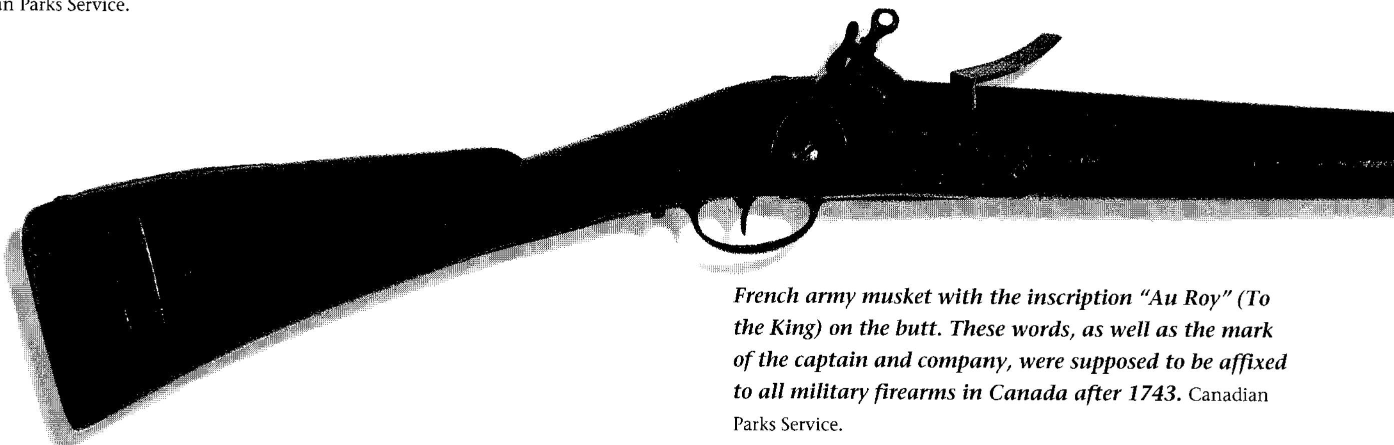


French army musket, 1728 model, made in Saint-Étienne, France, around 1745. Canadian Parks Service.



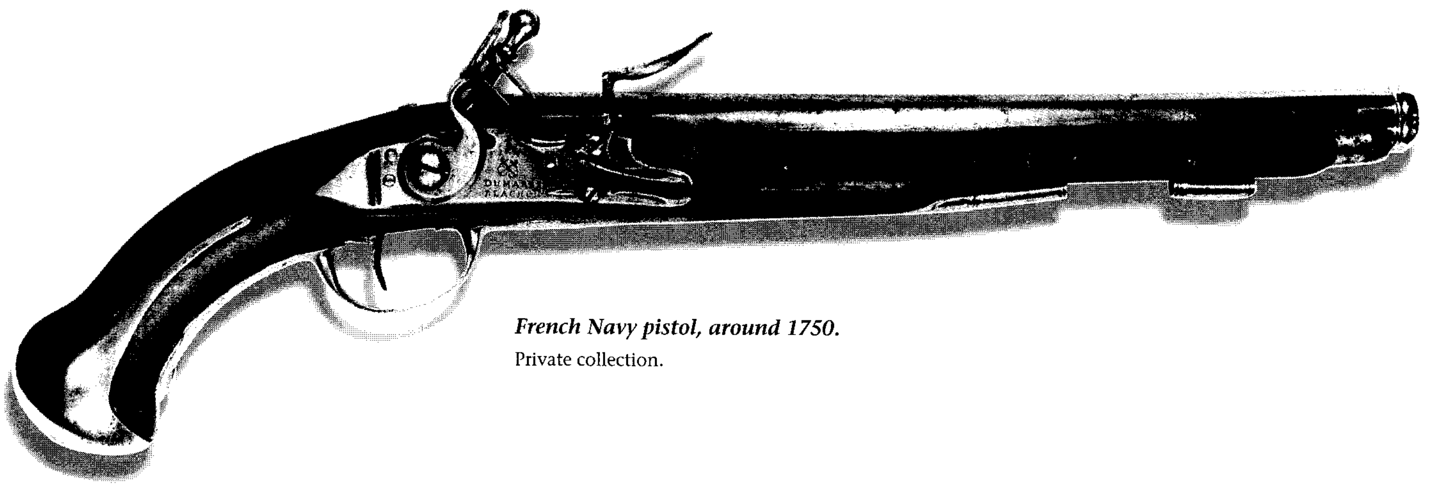
Hunting musket, manufactured in Tulle, France, used by the Canadian militia in 1730. Canadian Parks Service.

Hunting musket, manufactured in Tulle, France, used by the Canadian militia between 1720 and 1750. Canadian Parks Service.



French army musket with the inscription "Au Roy" (To the King) on the butt. These words, as well as the mark of the captain and company, were supposed to be affixed to all military firearms in Canada after 1743. Canadian Parks Service.

French officers' pistol, around 1740. Although firearms were not part of their official equipment, Canadian officers used them on expeditions. Canadian Parks Service.



French Navy pistol, around 1750.
Private collection.

Chapter 7

THE MILITARY EMPIRE

From the early seventeenth century onward, the French ventured deeper and deeper into the heart of the continent. Between 1658 and 1662, Pierre Radisson explored Lake Superior, went as far as Hudson Bay via the Albany River, and discovered the upper Mississippi. Other explorers followed. In 1673, Louis Jolliet and Father Marquette followed the great river which the Amerindians called the Mississippi to Arkansas. Going even further afield, Robert Cavalier de La Salle set off from Montreal and reached at the Gulf of Mexico in 1682. He took possession of the territories he traversed in the name of King Louis XIV, calling them Louisiana. The strategic and geopolitical significance of these explorations did not escape the French, who perceived the potential for an immense empire based on control of the St. Lawrence and Mississippi rivers. Two years later, La Salle left France with a fleet of several ships carrying settlers and about 100 soldiers to establish a new colony on the lands that he had discovered. He failed to find the mouth of the Mississippi, however, and finally met with disaster on the shores of Texas, where he was killed. Nevertheless, colonization continued from the north. Missionaries and merchants, followed by some settlers from Canada attracted by more temperate southern climes, established small posts on the upper Mississippi, called the Illinois country.

In 1699, d'Iberville founded Biloxi, and France gained a firm foothold on the Gulf of Mexico, thanks to the efforts of the Canadians. By the 1720s, a chain of forts along the Mississippi ensured communications between New Orleans and the Illinois. Small forts were then constructed as well on the banks of the Arkansas and Missouri rivers, extending French reach to the Amerindian nations of the Great Plains. Finally the La Vérendryes, father and sons, searched for the "great western sea" from 1730 to 1743, dotting their path with a series of forts as far as the Rocky Mountains and spreading French influence over another large portion of

the North American continent.

As with other empires of the past, the military would have a prominent role to play in building the one that France planned to forge in North America. In order to be successful, France had to control access to the interior of the continent. Although solid alliances were established with many Amerindian nations, France still needed to devote considerable human and military resources to pursuing the war with the Foxes, the allies of the Iroquois, and to impeding the expansion of the English and Spanish colonies to the east and south. In the end, it would fall to the soldiers and officers of the Compagnies franches de la Marine to carry out much of this phase of French empire-building in North America, by providing escorts for exploring expeditions, subduing the enemies of France, or protecting and administering the conquered territories.

Toward the Great Lakes

Frontenac wrote to Colbert in 1672 that the town of Quebec "could not be better located to become one day the capital of a great empire."[134] However, if Quebec managed to remain the administrative capital of Canada in the second half of the seventeenth century, it was Montreal that became the strategic hub due to its location near the junctions of a number of waterways radiating in all directions. It became the centre from which French troops were dispatched to the heart of the continent, and as a result, the headquarters of most of the Compagnies franches de la Marine. Of the 28 units in Canada, 19 were stationed in Montreal in comparison with only seven in Quebec and two in Trois-Rivières. Montreal therefore outstripped Quebec as the leading military bastion in the colony even though it lacked equivalent natural or even man-made defences, since its modest fortifications (wooden until 1720 and stone thereafter) were intended only to provide protection against marauders and not to withstand a regular siege. Montreal accordingly became the great base from which attacks were launched against all those opposing French dreams of expansion to the south and west.

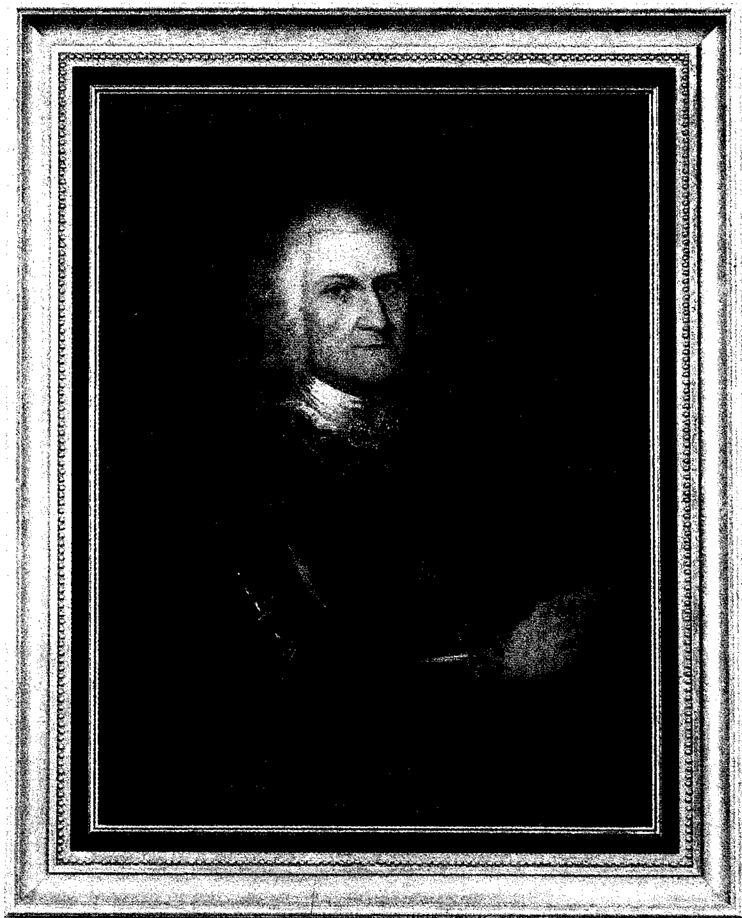
In 1673, at the same time that he was encouraging the great voyages of discovery to the south, the far-sighted Frontenac took the first concrete step toward the

establishment of a huge French empire in North America by building Fort Frontenac at the entrance to the Great Lakes, where Kingston, Ontario now stands. At first, a few soldiers detached from the small garrisons in Montreal and Quebec were stationed there, but after 1675, the companies engaged in the fur trade in this area provided their own soldiers. In 1684, these soldiers were replaced in turn by others from the Compagnies franches de la Marine, who thereby became the first royal garrison on the Great Lakes. A second garrison was established three years later at Niagara. Small detachments of soldiers were sent to Michilimackinac and even to the Illinois, although they were withdrawn in 1698 because they were too weak to face the Iroquois and other hostile tribes that could attack in force. Thus began the construction of a vast defensive system around the Great Lakes.

The main impediments to further westward expansion were eliminated by the "Great Peace"[135] ceremoniously concluded in Montreal, after long and tortuous negotiations between France, the Iroquois Confederacy, and other Amerindian nations on the Great Lakes. Without even awaiting the end of the negotiations, a contingent of 90 soldiers under the leadership of Antoine de La Mothe-Cadillac set out in 25 large canoes, reaching the banks of Lake Erie on July 24, 1701, where they founded Detroit. This was another case of military colonization, because most of the soldiers intended to settle there. Detroit flourished, being well situated for both the fur trade and lines of communication between Canada, the Illinois, and French settlements on the Mississippi.

As the French moved westward, they entered into alliances with most of the Amerindian tribes whom they encountered. However the Foxes, who were allies of the Iroquois and received encouragement from the

Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville (1680-1767) was nicknamed the "father of Louisiana." This Montreal officer, a brother of Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville, managed to transform a small French fort into a vast colony. Anonymous oil, dating from around 1730.
Musée d'art de Joliette.



Louis XV, King of France from 1715 to 1774, wearing the royal robes and insignia. Anonymous oil dating from the mid-eighteenth century.
National Archives of Canada (C604).

English, proved to be inveterate foes. They were ferocious warriors, valiant and daring. After various incidents and acts of provocation on their part, the French suggested that they live in peace near them. Many Foxes responded favourably to this invitation, appearing at Detroit in 1711. However, they quarrelled with other tribes and, in 1712, laid siege to the Amerindian villages around the fort. Commandant Dubuisson, having only 20 soldiers at his disposal, called out the militia and received support as well from hundreds of allied Illinois and Ottawas. The Foxes were pushed back and besieged in turn for 19 days inside their palisaded village. When they attempted to break out at night, they were trapped near Lake St. Clair and hundreds of their warriors were slaughtered. Although this defeat did not bring hostilities to an end, it did force the Foxes to lie low for some time.

The truce with the Foxes enabled the French to continue building their settlements along the Great Lakes. Although deprived of their garrisons during the War of Spanish Succession, these settlements continued to prosper. Michilimackinac remained the hub of the fur trade in the Northwest. Living there were a few missionaries, some voyageurs, some coureurs de bois, and a few settlers who had gone there from the banks of the St. Lawrence. Even before the end of hostilities with the Foxes, French settlements had been established as far away as La Baie (today Green Bay, Wisconsin). In addition, several settlements were already taking root in the Illinois (basically the southern part of the present state of Illinois and eastern Missouri), with the main centre being the village of Kaskaskia.

Beginning in 1715, after the interruption caused by the War of Spanish Succession, work resumed on the defensive system around the Great Lakes. Once again, garrisons were

detached to various posts, which had been practically deserted after 1698, and most notably, 20 soldiers were dispatched to Michilimackinac. In order to control the route between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi, Fort Miami (today Fort Wayne, Indiana) was built as well as another fort at Saint-Joseph (Niles, Michigan).

At this point, a bloody incident reminded the French that the Foxes still blocked their path. The Cherokees, who were allies of the Foxes, ambushed and killed two young officers belonging to the new Canadian military bourgeoisie. One was the son of Governor de Ramezay and the other the son of the Baron de Longueuil. The entire colony demanded vengeance, and in May 1716, a military expedition was organized against the Foxes. Led by Sieur de Louvigny, a contingent of 225 soldiers and militiamen, accompanied by numerous Amerindian allies, set out for the present state of Wisconsin, taking with them two small cannons and a mortar. After withstanding a siege for a few days inside a large village fortified with three palisades (near the present Sill Creek, Wisconsin), the Foxes capitulated.

The French felt that they had better keep the Foxes under surveillance, and so in 1717 they built Fort La Baie and a small garrison was sent to Chagouamigon (near Ashland, Wisconsin). Meanwhile, a sergeant and some ten soldiers were sent to Fort Saint-Louis de Pimitcouy (near Utica, Illinois). Since these forts ran along the Mississippi, it was decided to annex the "Illinois country" to Louisiana. Although the people of Illinois had originally come from the banks of the St. Lawrence, this decision made geographic sense and helped to improve the defence of the region. The few Canadian soldiers posted there were relieved by a detachment of troops from Louisiana, including about 50 soldiers under an officer of Canadian origin, Pierre Dugué de Boisbriant. Having left New Orleans, these men arrived in Kaskaskia in late 1718 and in 1720 built Fort Chartres on the banks of the Mississippi. It became the administrative centre of upper Louisiana, which continued to be called "the Illinois." Thereafter, garrisons from Louisiana acted in concert with Canadian detachments in the small forts of the Northwest.

That same year, at the time of the war of the Quadruple Alliance against Spain, the system of alliances with various Amerindian nations took an unexpected turn in favour of the French. Members of the Otos and Panis tribes annihilated a Spanish military expedition from Santa Fe, New Mexico as it approached the Illinois. It was led by Villasur, who hoped to oust French traders from the prairies. This setback for the Spanish made it easier for the French to build a few forts with small garrisons west of the Mississippi, of which Fort Cavagnal (near present-day Leavenworth, Kansas) was the farthest west. Thanks to this network of forts, the French now enjoyed a certain dominance in the central plains.

The End of the Foxes

Eager to expunge the memory of their humiliation in 1716 at the hands of the French, the Foxes began to make their presence felt again in the 1720s, engaging in a number of skirmishes and launching an attack on the Illinois nation, who were allies of the French. Commandant Lignery imposed a precarious peace on the Foxes in 1726, but the next year they concluded alliances with the Winnebagos, Sioux, Mascouten and Kickapoos against the French. In the meantime, the small garrison of the newly built Fort Beauharnois (near

Frontenac, Minnesota), finding itself squeezed between the Foxes and the Sioux, evacuated its position in October 1727, only to be captured by the Mascouten and Kickapoos. Fearing French vengeance, the Mascouten and Kickapoos decided to release the garrison the following spring and cancel their alliance with the Foxes. The Winnebagos also withdrew, while the Sioux opted for neutrality. In 1728, some 400 French soldiers and militiamen arrived in La Baie, accompanied by about 800 Amerindian allies. They burned the villages and crops of the Foxes, but were unable to surround them. The attackers then retreated to near the present city of Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

Commandant Lignery was severely reprimanded by Governor General Beauharnois for this partial failure. Taking the initiative again in 1729, Beauharnois asked his Amerindian allies simply to wipe the Foxes out. In October, a war party of Chippewas and Ottawas inflicted a major defeat on the Foxes. But even this was not enough to subdue them. Beauharnois subsequently dispatched a force of 600 soldiers and allied warriors, commanded by Captain Paul Marin, to help his allies. After five days of fighting at Little Lake Butte des Morts in Wisconsin in the spring of 1730, the Foxes were greatly weakened and decided in their desperation to seek refuge among the Iroquois south of Lake Ontario.

Early in August, their former allies, the Mascouten, warned the commandant of Fort Saint-Joseph, Coulon de Villiers, that the Foxes were moving eastward. The alarm went out to the commandants of Detroit, Fort Miami, and Fort Vincennes in upper Louisiana. However, another force of Frenchmen and Amerindians, led by Commandant Saint-Ange, was already pursuing the Foxes. Realizing that they were encircled, the fugitives built a fort.[136] Saint-Ange's force arrived on August 10, followed by Villiers' seven days later, as well as by others. After a few days had passed, the 900 besieged Foxes found themselves facing more than 200 Frenchmen and 1,200 of their Amerindian allies from Louisiana and the Illinois. Annoyed by what he considered the bad faith of the Foxes, Beauharnois refused all negotiations and demanded unconditional surrender. On September 9, the Foxes tried to escape under the cover of darkness but were quickly captured by their Amerindian enemies. They met a horrible end: 500 of them – warriors, women and children – were killed, and the 400 others were carted off as slaves. The French watched from the sidelines, not unhappy at this settling of accounts among Amerindians.

Only about 50 Fox warriors escaped the massacre. Their nation had been virtually extinguished, but the French had still not heard the last of them. Three years later, reinforced by a new alliance with the Sauks (or Sacs), they retaliated by attacking the French near La Baie. Twelve were killed, including four officers, and 16 wounded, of whom five were officers. Beauharnois was criticized by the Minister of the Navy. This strengthened the governor general's resolve to eliminate what seemed to be an indestructible nation, as well as its new allies. Commandant Noyelles was assigned this task, and in August 1734 he left Montreal for Iowa, where the Foxes were living, leading a force of 210 men including 130 Amerindian allies, whose numbers were increased during the trip by others. The party did not arrive until April 1735, exhausted by the long march and with its morale sapped by numerous desertions on the part of its Amerindian

allies. This time, the Foxes and their Sauk allies held the numerical advantage. After a few skirmishes, during which two officers were killed, a peace treaty was concluded. The Foxes, so powerful just ten years earlier, had lost their territory and were reduced to a small remnant of their former numbers. It seemed pointless to continue fighting. Two years later, Beauharnois finally pardoned the Foxes, which helped to increase French influence in upper Louisiana.

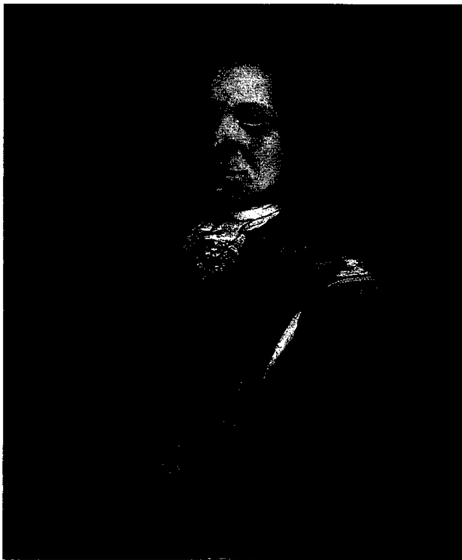
"Captain of the Illinois nation," about 1675.
Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Canadian Tactics in Louisiana

As part of New France, like Acadia or Canada, Louisiana had had its own troops since 1704, when a permanent garrison was established with the arrival of two Compagnies franches de la Marine, numbering 50 men each. This garrison was increased to four companies in 1715, and then to eight the next year. In 1717 there were 16 companies in Louisiana, which was under the monopoly of the Compagnie d'Occident (and then of the Compagnie des Indes, which succeeded it in 1721 when Louisiana annexed the Illinois) before the number of companies gradually fell back to their original strength. A company of Swiss soldier-workers also served in Louisiana from 1721 to 1725. However, the capture of Fort Rosalie (today Natchez, Mississippi) by the Natchez nation demonstrated the military weakness of Louisiana, which once again became a royal colony in 1731, administered by the Ministry of the Navy. The

Ministry sent out five new companies in addition to the eight already in place. The fourth company of Karrer's Swiss Regiment, numbering some 200 officers and soldiers, was also sent out.

The troops in Louisiana were stationed primarily in the many forts lining the Mississippi from the Gulf of Mexico to the Illinois. Some of the commanding officers were originally Canadians, and officer cadets were also present after 1738. The organization of these troops was similar to that of the Canadian forces. Their weaponry, uniform and type of recruitment were identical. Louisiana also had a militia, whose organization reflected that of the Canadian militia in the Illinois and the militia in the French West Indies.



Chevalier Jean-Louis de La Corne de Saint-Luc (1666-1732) lost an eye in the siege of Gironne in 1684. He obtained a commission as a second lieutenant the following year in the Compagnies franches de la Marine in Canada, where he took part in many battles and acquired a reputation for bravery. Oil attributed to Michel Dessaillant de Richeterre, around 1710.
Musée du Séminaire de Québec.

In 1739 and 1740, the superiority of the tactics of the Navy troops from Canada over those customary in Europe was again brilliantly demonstrated in Louisiana. The Chickasaw nation, under English influence, was at war with the French. It was therefore decided in France to send an expeditionary corps of 600 men. Unfortunately, these forces were led as if on a European campaign. They moved ponderously, while the Chickasaws were highly elusive or waited, well hidden, in their distant fortified villages. By early 1740, many soldiers had also died of illness, and Sieur de Noailles, who was commanding the expedition, felt compelled to retreat.

The Minister of the Navy had asked the governor general of New France to send a military expedition from Canada to join that of Sieur de Noailles. Accordingly, a force of 442 men, including 319 Amerindian allies, left Montreal in July 1739 headed for Louisiana, under the command of the Baron de Longueuil.[137] Another party from Michilimackinac, led by Captain Pierre-Joseph Céloron de Blainville, joined it and the entire contingent descended the Mississippi together. They joined the French troops in early January 1740, north of the present city of Memphis, Tennessee. The French expeditionary forces spoke of withdrawing, but Captain de Blainville, with about 100 Canadian soldiers and militiamen and 200 Iroquois and Chactas allies, marched resolutely toward the enemy villages. They attacked vigorously, leaving the Chickasaws no other choice but to sue for peace, to which he agreed. French military honour was saved, and the expeditionary forces returned to their respective bases, some to France and some in Canada.

New England

The declaration of war between France and Great Britain in 1744 moved the main theatre of military conflict from the North American heartland to the east. Many raids were mounted from Canada on the British colonies in western Massachusetts and Connecticut and in the

province of New York north of Albany, in order to block their expansion. Most of these attacks were carried out by small groups of Abenakis or Mohawks allied with the French, although Canadian soldiers and militiamen occasionally took part. For instance, Saratoga, in what is now the state of New York, was hit in November 1745 and then again in the summer of 1746 by powerful expeditions from Canada led by Commandant Paul Marin de la Malgue.

The governor of Massachusetts reinforced his frontier defences by building a number of forts. Four hundred and forty-five men were mobilized to guard them, and these forces were increased in 1746 by another 200. In order to heighten the hostility of the Amerindians, he instituted a system of bounties for the scalps of Frenchmen or their allies, including those of "females or males under 12 years of age."[138] However, this deplorable policy did not have the expected results, and in August a large expedition led by Commandant Rigaud de Vaudreuil razed Fort Massachusetts (now Adams, Massachusetts).

Meanwile, the governor of New York was also taking action. He invited militiamen from New Jersey, Connecticut and Maryland to join with

Charles Le Moyne, second Baron of Longueuil (1687-1755), wearing the uniform of the Compagnies franches de la Marine in Canada. He served in the garrison for many years on the Montreal general staff. In 1739-40, he commanded the Canadian expedition which fought the Chickasaws in Louisiana. Anonymous oil, dating from around 1733.

Musée d'art de Joliette.

New Yorkers in an attack on Fort Saint-Frédéric. The troops were finally marshalled in late 1746 a few kilometres north of Albany. However, a number of disagreements, which were reflected in the *New York Gazette*, regarding payment for the costs of the expedition and the embezzlement said to have occurred in relation to the purchase of blue coats and red breeches for the 500 New Jersey volunteers, caused the entire project to collapse.

While the militiamen from the British colonies retreated, the raids by the Canadians and their allies only increased. Fort No. 4 (today Charlestown, New Hampshire) and the new Fort Massachusetts, rebuilt in May, managed to resist, but the garrison of Fort Clinton (near Easton, New

Canadian soldiers wore short capots, leggings, breechcloths and mocassins when leaving on lengthy expeditions through the forest. Reconstitution by Francis Back. Canadian Parks Service.

York) was virtually decimated by Luc de La Corne de Saint-Luc leading a party of about 20 soldiers and militiamen and 200 Amerindians. Several villages between Deerfield, Massachusetts and White River (in the region of Hartford, Vermont) had to be abandoned. Only the peace treaty signed in Europe on October 7, 1748 brought some respite to the colonies after the news finally arrived in Boston on May 10, 1749. The Americans felt a certain relief, although the problem of their inability to defend their borders against raids from Canada remained unresolved.

The Ohio Valley

Possession of the Ohio Valley was another sore point between Britain and France. The French based their claims on the explorations of La Salle during the previous century, while the British claimed that it was part of Iroquois country, and since the Iroquois were British subjects, the land belonged to them. Although the French had no doubts about the legitimacy of their cause, they had built only one post, Fort Vincennes at the confluence of the Ohio and Wabash rivers, to protect this river route. Meanwhile, the number of American traders in the region increased steadily during the 1740s.

In June 1749, about 30 soldiers and 180 militiamen, accompanied by a few Amerindians, left Montreal on a reconnaissance mission. Under the command of Captain Céloron de Blainville, they followed the Allegheny River to Ohio. Along the way, they buried lead plaques to indicate that this territory belonged to the king of France. After six months of travel, Céloron brought back alarming news: he had been unable to reach any agreement with the American traders, whose intransigence had only increased during his negotiations with them. Furthermore, the

Amerindians living in the region seemed to support the English. The only hope, therefore, was military occupation.

Governor Jonquière, an indecisive man, vacillated. While he dithered, the anti-French feelings of the Amerindians mingled with those of the Americans who wanted to settle the Ohio Valley. During the summer, the Onondagas gave their approval to colonists from Virginia who wished to settle and build a fort in the valley. Furthermore, the Miamis, who had previously befriended the French, now turned against them under the leadership of Chief Memeskia. They even welcomed some American traders in their village of Pickawillany (today Piqua, Ohio), over which the British flag flew. Without awaiting instructions from Versailles or from the governor, French soldiers in the western forts took action. The cadet Charles-Michel Mouet de Langlade, son of a leading fur merchant and the daughter of an Ottawa chief, led a punitive expedition of around 250 Amerindians and a few Canadian militiamen in a surprise attack on Pickawillany while the warriors were away hunting. Memeskia was killed and eaten by his Amerindian enemies, while the traders were taken prisoner and carried off to Canada. Before leaving, the troops raised not one, but two French flags over the ruins of Pickawillany. This incident had a considerable impact on future developments. British influence declined among the Amerindians in the region, who now understood the fate that awaited them if they courted American traders. The Miamis themselves were divided, with most choosing to renew their friendship with the French.

When Governor Jonquière died in March 1752, still without having made a decision, the Marquis de Duquesne was sent out from France as his replacement with specific instructions to secure the Ohio Valley for France. He made considerable resources available to build a number of forts in the valley, conferring this task upon Captain Paul Marin de la Malgue, an experienced officer from the western campaigns who had distinguished himself during the war with the Foxes. Malgue left Montreal accompanied by 300 soldiers of the Compagnies franches de la Marine, 18 from the Compagnie des canonniers-bombardiers, about 1,200 militiamen and 200 Amerindians. Fort Presqu'île (today the city of Erie, Pennsylvania on the southern shore of Lake Erie) was completed in May 1753, and Fort Le Boeuf in July. Then, a detachment proceeded to the junction of the Allegheny and French rivers and began construction of Fort Machault at the Amerindian village of Venango (today Franklin, Pennsylvania). All this work was accomplished under difficult climatic conditions, with a scorching summer yielding to cold September rains. Furthermore, their provisions often spoiled, causing illness. Marin died, and was replaced by another veteran of the western campaigns, Jacques Le Gardeur de Saint-Pierre.

The governor of Virginia, Robert Dinwiddie, was equally convinced that the Ohio Valley belonged to the king of England, and he took a dim view of the construction of all these forts. He therefore sent an ultimatum to Fort Le Boeuf, demanding that the garrison leave the area. The bearer of this message would one day become famous; it was George Washington. However, the ultimatum he delivered did not impress either Captain Saint-Pierre, who received it on December 11, 1753, or Governor Duquesne, who sent a large expedition of reinforcements to Ohio on February 3, 1754 under

Claude Pécaudy de Contrecoeur. Arriving on April 16 at the junction of the Monongahela and Ohio rivers, Contrecoeur found a company of Virginian soldiers building a fort. He ordered them to withdraw immediately, which they did the next day. The French soldiers then continued to build the fort, which they named Fort Duquesne (today Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania) in honour of the governor general of New France.

Alarmed by events in Ohio, Governor Dinwiddie proposed energetic countermeasures: the construction of a fort on the Monongahela River, the mobilization of 800 militiamen for a few weeks, and the immediate raising of a provincial corps of 300 volunteers. He wanted nothing less than the eradication of French possessions in Ohio. However, the neighbouring colony of Pennsylvania was governed at the time by Quakers, a pacifist religious sect, and was the only one of the 13 American colonies not to have passed a law obliging men to serve in a militia. Its governor was authorized at most to enlist non-Quaker volunteers (who were paid, however, by the colony). In short, there was little hope of raising large forces there. Even Philadelphia did not have a regular garrison. However, Virginia was a large, prosperous colony with 27,000 militiamen. In February 1754, the legislative assembly approved the measures proposed by Dinwiddie. A Virginia regiment was rapidly formed, equipped, and supplied with red uniforms. Soon a detachment was en route for Ohio, its young colonel none other than George Washington.

Warned by his scouts of the approach of these forces, the commandant of Fort Duquesne, Claude Pécaudy de Contrecoeur, sent out a negotiating party of about 40 men under the command of Ensign Joseph Coulon de Villiers, Sieur de Jumonville. However, on the morning of May 28, 1754, Washington's detachment of 400 Americans and their Amerindian allies attacked the little party. In 15 minutes, ten men were killed, including Jumonville; one was injured; and 21 were taken captive. Only one member of the party succeeded in escaping and returned to Fort Duquesne, a Canadian militiaman named Monceau.

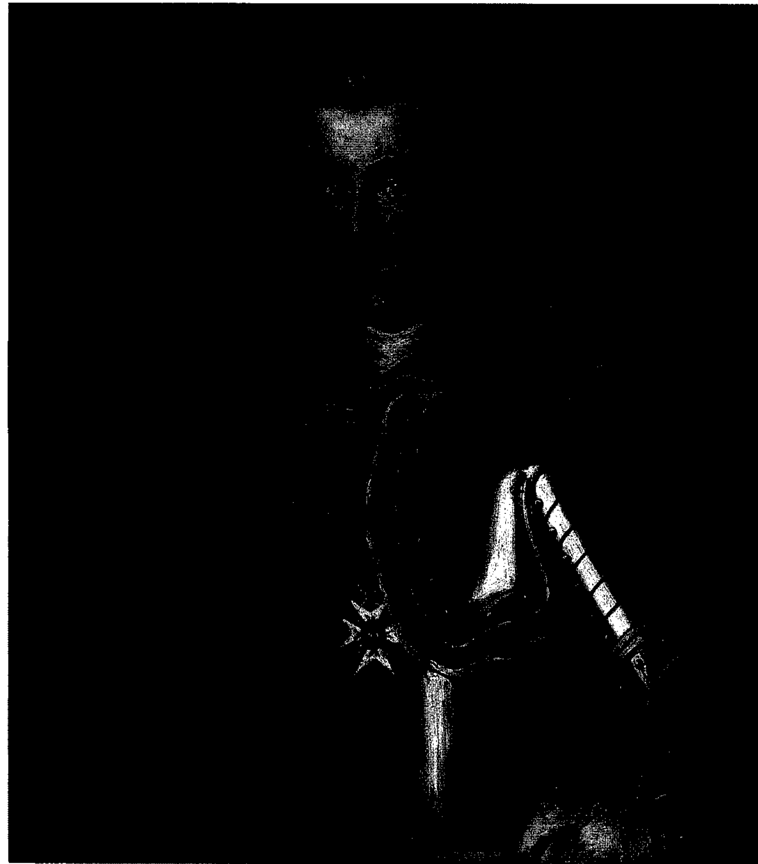
We will doubtless never know for certain what happened on the site of the present-day town of Jumonville, Pennsylvania, on May 28, 1754, and the controversy will continue. According to some witnesses, Jumonville was killed while attempting to parley, something which Washington denied. For French-Canadian historians, it was murder pure and simple. However, according to many American historians, anxious to defend the reputation of the future father of their country, Jumonville fell into a trap, fire was exchanged, and he was one of the unlucky ones who lost their lives. Whatever the facts, this grave diplomatic faux pas seriously threatened the peace between England and France.

These events had further repercussions when Captain Louis Coulon de Villiers of the Navy troops arrived at Fort Duquesne with reinforcements on the following June 26 and learned of the death of his brother. He was given command of a corps of some 600 Canadian militiamen and soldiers, as well as 100 Amerindians, and set out in pursuit of the American volunteers. Arriving at the site of the ambush, he interred the scalped, unburied bodies of the French, and then carried on with his pursuit. The Americans were not as skillful as the Canadians at disappearing into the woods, and so they took refuge in a little fort, aptly named Fort

Necessity (near Farmington, Pennsylvania). Here Coulon de Villiers caught up with them on July 3. After a heavy exchange of fire, which killed 100 Americans, Washington capitulated. Coulon de Villiers then demonstrated great moderation, allowing the man whom he considered his brother's murderer to return home over the Allegheny Mountains.

Although the act of surrender signed by Washington admitted the attack that had killed Jumonville and the usurpation of French territory, the Americans showed no inclination to respect this signature and the conditions of surrender when it came to occupying the new territories. The strength of the Virginia Regiment was increased to 700 men and three independent companies of reinforcements arrived from New York and South Carolina. In late 1754, these troops were stationed east of the Allegheny Mountains in order to prevent any French incursions. These repercussions of the "Jumonville incident" aroused another diplomatic storm in Europe, but in reinforcing their defences rather than attacking, the Americans once again admitted their inability, from a strictly military point of view, to take on the Canadian forces.

Jean-Baptiste Philippe Testard de Montigny (1724-86), an officer in the Compagnies franches de la Marine. He distinguished himself in raids on New England in 1746-47, and then in Ohio and in the Great Lakes region during the Seven Years' War. He was made a Chevalier de Saint Louis in 1757. Château Ramezay, Montreal.



Discovery of the "Western Sea"

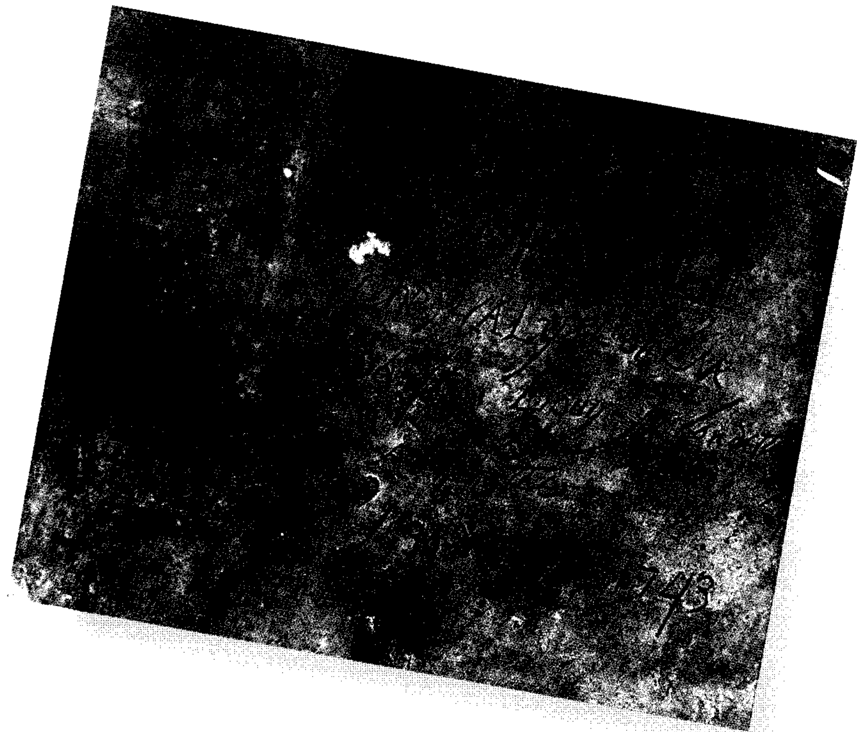
While the French were finally overwhelming the Foxes and establishing their hegemony on the central plains, another phase in the creation of a vast French empire was being played out in the Northwest. Its principal hero was an obscure Canadian officer rather lacking in means despite his brilliant service record:

Pierre Gaultier de La Vérendrye. This phase began toward the end of the 1720s when La Vérendrye was commanding a post at the outer limit of the known world, Kaministigoyan (now Thunder Bay, Ontario), and heard the Amerindians speak of vast plains stretching far into the distance and the sun setting into a western sea. These tales fired his imagination, and in 1730 he proposed an exploratory expedition, which was approved both in Canada by Governor General Beauharnois and in France by the Minister of the Navy, the Count de Maurepas. After two centuries of expeditions to both the north and south, European explorers still had not found the renowned northwest passage and a huge section of the continent remained uncharted. The French still had not ventured much beyond Lake Superior, despite a few attempts that were abandoned due to fears of Amerindian attacks. La Vérendrye's plan to discover the answer to one of the great enigmas of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries met with interest in Versailles, this time on the part of Philippe d'Orléans, who had acted as regent during the minority of Louis XV. The next year, Lieutenant La Vérendrye set out at the head of an expedition that included a few cadets, three of whom were his own sons, and a missionary. This type of organization was subsequently employed for all explorations of the west. Although missionaries and voyageurs went along, the command and support systems for these expeditions of discovery were all military, an aspect that is rarely pointed out.

Thus began 15 years of remarkable discoveries. The expedition was organized very carefully, because the La Vérendryes would have to trade with the Amerindians in order to finance their expedition. As they progressed, they left a string of forts in their wake: Fort Saint-Pierre (Fort Francis, Ontario) in 1731; Fort Saint-Charles (Magnussen Island, Manitoba) the following year, and Fort Maurepas, south of Lake Winnipeg, in 1734. The few coureurs de bois who were already in the region had to accept the arrival of royal authority, and the Amerindian nations through whose territories the expedition passed were generally hospitable. However, the Sioux laid a trap, killing 21 Frenchmen, including one of La Vérendrye's sons and the missionary on the expedition. Rather than risking a military confrontation, La Vérendrye played the alliance game. He would be revenged eight years later when the Crees and Assiniboines crushed the Sioux.

Though the vast rolling prairies on which the La Vérendryes erected their small forts might bear some resemblance to a "western sea," the Minister of the Navy would be content with no less than the real thing. La Vérendrye pushed still further, building Fort La Reine (Portage la Prairie, Manitoba) and then reaching Mandan country near the present city of Spanish, North Dakota. But still no western sea! Exhausted, La Vérendrye returned to Fort La Reine, leaving his two sons to continue the explorations alone.

Thus Louis-Joseph and François La Vérendrye proceeded separately, one to the present Cedar Lake, Manitoba, via the Saskatchewan River, and the other in the opposite direction to what is now Nebraska, probably not far from the Spanish missions in northern New Mexico. However, they joined forces for the most important of all these expeditions. Leaving Fort La Reine on April 29, 1742 in the company of two other Frenchmen and Amerindian guides, they reached eastern Montana or southwestern North



Lead plaque, buried on March 30, 1743 by the brothers Louis-Joseph and François de la Vérendrye, near the present city of Pierre, South Dakota, and discovered in 1913. On one side are the coat of arms of France and an engraved inscription in Latin mentioning the king, Louis XV, the Marquis de Beauharnois and Lieutenant Pierre de la Vérendrye as well as the date, 1741. On the other side is a second engraved inscription, dated May 30, 1743, stating that the plaque was left there by the La Vérendrye brothers and their companions Louis Lalonditte and Amiotte. Nothing is known about the latter, but they may have been soldiers. This plaque is preserved in the Robinson State Museum in Pierre. Photo: South Dakota State Historical Society.

Dakota in August, and by December were in northeastern Wyoming. The white men searching for the great western sea were a real curiosity for the nomadic Amerindians of the plains, who eventually joined them. Soon a procession of about 2,000 Amerindians was advancing slowly over the plains with the young explorers. On January 8, 1743, they finally saw in the distance huge, snow-capped mountains: the Rockies! Upon approaching, they realized that the mountains presented an insurmountable barrier and that they could go no farther. They therefore decided to return to Fort La Reine, where they arrived safe and sound on July 2, 1743 after an absence of 14 months. These two cadets of the Compagnies franches de la Marine du Canada had just accomplished one of the most extraordinary expeditions in the history of North America.

However, their advance to the Rocky Mountains furthered only geographic knowledge of the Great Plains, while what was wanted in high places was the great western sea. Therefore, the magnitude of these explorations was not fully appreciated, and the La Vérendryes were recalled. The sons remained simple cadets for a few more years, before becoming officers. They were never decorated for their exploits. La Vérendrye senior, however, was promoted to the rank of captain and awarded the Cross of Saint Louis shortly before his death in 1749.

Blowing Up the Powder Keg

The life of the handful of officers and soldiers manning the small forts scattered across the Prairies was far from easy, surrounded as they were by Amerindians of variable disposition. The following incident at Fort La Reine illustrates how these men needed nerves of steel in order to survive.

Toward the end of 1751, the garrison consisted of only five French soldiers of the Compagnies franches de la Marine, commanded by Captain Jacques Le Gardeur de Repentigny. He had gained considerable experience dealing with Amerindians and had been awarded the Cross of Saint Louis.

One morning, about 200 Assiniboine warriors burst into the fort. The commandant raced to meet them, reprimanding them "roundly" for being so bold as to enter in this way, throwing the most insolent out, and asking the others to depart, before returning to his quarters. Soon a soldier arrived to tell him that the Amerindians had taken the guardhouse and seized the weapons there. Repentigny ran over and accosted them once again. However, it became apparent this time that the Assiniboines fully intended to kill him and pillage the fort. Without missing a beat, Repentigny seized a blazing torch, ran to the powder magazine and opened a keg.

The Assiniboines on his heels stopped short when they saw him pass the torch over the powder. Repentigny reported that he then had his interpreter tell the Amerindians "in a firm voice that [he] would not perish at their hands and that in dying [he] would have the glory of inflicting the same fate on all of them." His account continues, "The savages saw the torch and the open powder keg more than they actually heard the words of my interpreter. They all flew to the gate of the fort, which they shook tremendously in their haste to depart. I quickly threw away the torch, and had nothing more pressing to do than to go and close the gate of my fort."

The French spent a "peaceful" winter in the fort, but decided in the spring of 1752 to abandon it because, as Repentigny said, "It would not have been prudent to leave any Frenchmen there." He was right. Four days after the French left, the Assiniboines burned the fort down.

The brothers Louis-Joseph and François de La Vérendrye, both cadets in the Compagnies franches de la Marine of Canada, who set out to discover the "Western Sea" and reached the Rocky Mountains in January 1743. Charles W. Jefferys. Water-colour.
Gift of R.Y. Eaton to the Art Gallery of Ontario.

After the departure of the La Vérendryes, others continued their explorations. Fort La Jonquière was constructed on the banks of the Saskatchewan River, in the middle of the modern province of the same name, probably in the Nipawin region. It was clearly the most westerly of all posts with small French garrisons. These activities left a network of forts dotted across the prairies after the 1730s, which despite being trading posts were under military command.

The Zenith of the French Empire in North America

By the mid-eighteenth century, the North American possessions of

the king of France looked like a giant "T," reaching across Canada from Cape Breton Island in the east to the middle of Saskatchewan in the west, and descending from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico. Despite the enormous distances between forts and settlements, detachments of Navy soldiers were scattered all through this territory. These soldiers stood guard under very different conditions, from Quebec to La Baie to Fort La Reine. They succeeded in dominating hostile Amerindians, like the Foxes, but also in forging alliances and ties with many other nations, which played an important part in the establishment of the French empire. It was as much by the diplomacy of its officers as by force of arms that France ensured its commercial and diplomatic hegemony over these vast expanses. Without denying the slowly emerging British colonies in what is now Canada the credit they deserve, the first half of the eighteenth century was truly the heyday of French power in North America.

All this became possible beginning at the end of the seventeenth century because New France had developed a strong military organization and the Canadians, after living for decades at the mercy of the indigenous peoples, took advantage of what they had learned. A highly effective militia was established and the officers of the regular troops were recruited increasingly among the Canadian gentry, whether by birth or appointment. The government of New France was structured and operated in a thoroughly military fashion, and military influences pervaded civilian, legal and economic affairs. The influence of the military even extended to the church, either through the soldiers who protected the missionaries, or military engineers who were asked to draw up plans for the construction of churches.

The shift from traditional European methods of warfare to original Canadian tactics during the second half of the seventeenth century was also extremely important to the development of New France because it enabled the growing colony to keep the Americans at bay. The soldiers and militiamen of New France were able, with the assistance of their Amerindian allies, to control almost the entire North American heartland, because only they could conduct operations far from their bases and search out and defeat Amerindian enemies in their own homeland, despite some minor setbacks.

By the end of the seventeenth century, the extraordinary success of the military in New France was beginning to encourage a sense of Canadian nationhood. Military institutions dominated society, providing the basic social and governmental organization (in which Canadian officers played a prominent role) and adapting European structures to North American needs and geography. All this reinforced the distinct identity of Canadians. They still considered themselves Frenchmen, but at the same time they identified increasingly with their new country. In the beginning, Canada was only a theoretical entity, but for the soldiers and militiamen who criss-crossed it in all directions whether by canoe, on foot, or on snowshoes in the winter, it gradually took on a real identity. They explored it, fought for it, and discussed it among themselves.

It was from this vision of the country, which grew out of what these men had seen with their own eyes and defended with their lives, that a sense of nationhood was born in their hearts.

NOTES

AC	Archives nationales de France, Colonies
AG	Archives de la Guerre
AM	Archives nationales de France, Marine
ANQQ	Archives nationales du Québec, Quebec City
ANQM	Archives nationales du Québec, Montreal
AR	Archives du port de Rochefort
BL	British Library
BN	Bibliothèque nationale de France
BRH	Bulletin des recherches historiques
NAC	National Archives of Canada
PRO	Public Records Office
RAPQ	Rapport de l'Archiviste de la province de Québec

1 *Les Voyages de Jacques Cartier*, 1545 edition revised and annotated by Jean Dumont (Montreal: Les Amis de l'histoire, 1969, p. 191.

2 Champlain, Samuel de, *Voyages et découvertes faites en la Nouvelle-France depuis l'année 1615 jusqu'à la fin de l'année 1618* (Paris: 1619), ed. C.-H. Laverdière under the title *Oeuvres de Champlain* (Quebec City: 1870), Vol. IV, pp. 42-43.

3 Champlain, Samuel de, *Les Voyages du sieur de Champlain* (Paris: 1613), ed. C.-H. Laverdière under the title *Oeuvres de Champlain* (Quebec City: 1870), Vol. III, p. 214.

4 Sagard, Gabriel, *Le Grand Voyage au pays des Hurons*, 1632 edition revised and annotated by Jean Dumont (Montreal: Les Amis de l'histoire, 1969), p. 136.

5 Ibid.

6 Maylen, John, *Gallic Perfidy: A Poem* (Boston: 1758), p. 15. This scene took place in Montreal in 1757. It was one of the prisoners of the siege of Fort William Henry who met this fate. The Amerindians were intoxicated at the time.

7 *Les Voyages de Jacques Cartier*, p. 203.

8 Sagard, Gabriel, *Le Grand Voyage au pays des Hurons*, p. 136.

9 Champlain, Samuel de, *Les Voyages du sieur de Champlain*, Vol. III, p. 194.

10 Maréchal, Sylvain, *Costumes civils actuels de tous les peuples connus*, 4 vols., (Paris: 1784-87), Vol. IV, p. 282.

11 All the experts agree on this. The only contemporary illustrations showing this detail are related to the god Odin. It is possible that some Viking priests of the pagan era wore them for ceremonies. It should be added that such a decoration would be not only cumbersome but dangerous in hand-to-hand combat.

12 Brantôme (1535-1614), Pierre de Bourdeille de, *Le Rosier des guerres*, quoted in Wanty, Emile, *L'Art de la guerre* (Verviers, Belgium: Gérard, 1967), 4 vol., Vol. 1, p. 206.

13 Several companies together formed armed "bands," types of battalions with variable numbers of soldiers established permanently in France by King Louis XI in 1480. In 1534, legions were established, but with little success and bands returned during the 1540s, before the current regimental structure was finally adopted.

[14] Diaz del Castillo, Bernal. *The Conquest of New Spain*, trans. and annotated by J.M. Cohen (London: Folio Society, 1974), pp. 203-204. These were soldiers of Cortez' army in Mexico in 1519.

[15] Hakluyt, Richard. *The Principal Navigations*, p. 225.

[16] *Les Français en Amérique pendant la première moitié du XVIe siècle*, ed. C.-A. Julien, R. Herval and T. Beauchesne (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1946), pp.27-28, 41. The sailor's name was Colas Mancel. Henry Jesanne, a young page, was killed by the "nasty Indians." The French had gone ashore unarmed in search of drinking water and "were treacherously attacked." This incident illustrates the extent to which explorers were exposed to danger. In addition, the ship ran aground on the way home after being attacked by pirates. Only 27 crew members, including Captain Gonneville, survived.

[17] *Les Voyages de Jacques Cartier*, pp. 174, 189.

[18] Ibid., pp. 202, 207.

[19] *A Collection of Documents Relating to Jacques Cartier and the Sieur de Roberval*, ed. H.P. Biggar (Ottawa: National Archives of Canada, 1930), p. 71.

[20] Ibid., p. 277. Another report estimated the number at 1,500 people. See Biggar, pp. 378-380. The data on this subject is contradictory.

[21] Ibid., p. 277.

[22] Louis XI, quoted in Toudouze, Georges G., Les *Équipages de la Marine française* (Paris: Éditions militaires illustrées, 1943), p. 55.

[23] Les Français en Amérique, p. 203.

[24] Barkham, Michael M., *Report on 16th Century Spanish Basque Shipbuilding*, c. 1550 to c. 1600 (Ottawa: Canadian Parks Service), Manuscript Report Number 422, p. 34, quoting the 1571 document. Proulx, Jean-Pierre, *Les Basques et la pêche à la baleine au Labrador au XVIe siècle* (Ottawa: Canadian Parks Service, 1993) also mentions the arms that should be on board. After 1552, the ships sailing for the West Indies were supposed to carry arms roughly similar in their composition and proportions to those carried by the Basque galleons. For example, a 220- to 320-ton ship was supposed to carry 10 cannons, 24 swivel guns, 30 harquebuses, 30 crossbows, 24 shields, 24 breast-plates, 30 helmets, etc. Galleons built by Basque outfitters were often resold to Seville outfitters after two or three seasons in the North Atlantic. Then these galleons were repaired and joined the West Indian fleet, which generally sailed on calmer seas. For more information about the West Indian fleet, see Haring, Clarence Henry, *Trade and Navigation Between Spain and the Indies in the Time of the Hapsburgs* (Harvard University Press, 1918); Barkham, Selma, "The Spanish Province of Terranova," *The Canadian Archivist/L'Archiviste canadien*, II, No. 5, 1974, pp. 73-83. The name "Terranova" appeared during the 1560s in documents of the galleon captains, who were legally considered, "after God and the king," to be masters of this place as they were of their ships. The will of the sailor Juan Martinez, the oldest known document in this regard, was dictated in "Butus" on June 22, 1577 and was legally recognized.

[25] *Les Français en Amérique*, p.203

[26] Deher, Sébastien, quoted in Brzezinski, Richard, *The Army of Gustavus Adolphus, 1 Infantry* (London: Osprey Military, 1991), p. 17.

[27] Sagard, Gabriel, *Le Grand Voyage au pays des Hurons*, p. 33.

[28] *Relations des Jésuites.* (Quebec City: 1858), 1636, pp. 41-42. Lieutenant de L'Isle was also a knight of the Order of Malta.

[29] Ibid., 1641, p. 46.

[30] Dollier de Casson, François, "Histoire du Montréal," *Mémoire de la Société historique de Montréal*, (Montreal, 1868), pp. 79-80.

[31] *Relations des Jésuites* (1653), p. 3. This was the famous "levy of 1653," in which many Quebec families have their origins.

[32] Dollier de Casson, p. 54.

[33] *Journal des Jésuites*, according to the original manuscript, ed. C.-H. Laverdière and H.-R. Casgrain (Quebec City: 1871), p. 9. For the mission of Sainte-Marie, see Kidd, Kenneth, E., *The Excavation of Ste-Marie I* (University of Toronto, 1949). In 1645, 58 Frenchmen, of whom 22 were soldiers, were at Sainte-Marie. (AC, C11A, Vol. 1, f. 237), decree of March 27, 1647 regulating the "habitans" of the land of Canada. (AC, C11A, Vol. 1, f. 245), decree regulating the "habitans" of New France. Paris, March 5, 1648.

[34] *Journal des Jésuites*, p. 144.

[35] AC, C11A, Vol. 2, f. 183. Estat au vray des charges es despenses . . . 1652.

[36] AC, D2C, Vol. 47. To be counted with the soldiers who were at Onondaga from 1656 to 1658 (Quebec City, May 4, 1658). Financial record stating that 180 livres had been given to Dupuy in France by Father Lejeune, probably to cover recruiting costs, in addition to 188 livres for his services. Seventeen soldiers were named, five of whom were paid after September 1657 and the others after May 1656.

[37] Quoted in Vachon, André, "Dollard des Ormeaux, Adam," *Dictionnaire biographique du Canada* (Quebec City: Université Laval), Vol. 1, p. 282.

[38] BN, Mélanges Colbert, Vol. 109 bis, f. 845. Du Seuil to Colbert, Brouage, July 17, 1662. The *Aigle d'or* had been built in Brest in 1658, and the *Flûte royale* purchased in Holland in the same year. See Vichot, Jacques, *Répertoire des navires de guerre français* (Paris: Association des amis des musées de la Marine, 1967).

[39] ANQM, Ordonnances, box 1663-1670, Montreal, January 27, 1663. Ordinance of the Governor founding the militia of the Sainte-Famille de Jésus-Marie-Joseph with a roll of its soldiers.

[40] *Mémoires de Louis XIV*, ed. Jean Longnon (Paris: Tallandier, 1927).

[41] AG, A1, Vol. 155, p. 65, May 31, 1659, the King to the Prince of Carignan under "the name of Carignan." AG, A1, Vol. 154, p. 65, January 1659. Taken from the muster-roll of the troops of the Army of Italy. In fact, it was called Carignan-Salières. Although largely composed of Frenchmen by then, the regiment was still considered to be the most experienced of the foreign regiments.

[42] J.C.B., *Voyage au Canada dans le nord de l'Amérique septentrionale fait depuis l'an 1751 à 1761*, ed. H.R. Casgrain (Quebec City: 1887), pp.34-35.

[43] BN, Mélanges Colbert, Vol. 129, f. 146. La Rochelle, May 4, 1665, Colbert de Terron to J.-B. Colbert.

[44] *Journal des Jésuites*, p. 343

[45] France, Archives des Affaires étrangères, series B (mémoires et documents), *Amérique*, Vol. 5, f. 143. Memorandum of the King to Sieur Talon, March 2, 1665.

[46] In 1676 the regiment became Soissons, from the name of its new colonel. It then took the name of the province of Perche in 1690. The regiment, French in actual fact for decades, then officially dropped its "foreign" status and was integrated into the "French infantry." In 1744, the Perche regiment was incorporated into the Gardes de Lorraine, which became Lorraine in 1766.

[47] AC, C11A, Vol. 4, f. 28. Paris, March 9, 1673. Memorandum from Talon to the King.

[48] AC, B, Vol. 3, f. 22. Paris, February 11, 1671. Colbert to Talon.

[49] AC, C13C, Vol. 3, f. 49. Memorandum on the expenditures of Sieur de La Salle at Fort Frontenac (1675-1684).

[50] AC, C11A, Vol. 125, f. 32. Paris, April 3, 1669. Louis XIV to Courcelles.

[51] Ruette d'Auteuil, "Mémoire sur l'état présent du Canada," December 12, 1715, RAPQ, p. 59.

[52] *Relations par lettres de l'Amérique septentrionale* (années 1709 et 1710), ed. Camille de Rochemonteix (Paris: Letouzey et aîné, 1904), p. 6.

[53] AC, C11A, Vol. 15, f. 120. Quebec City, October 15, 1697. Champigny to the minister.

[54] AC, C11A, Vol. 3, f. 172. Quebec City, November 11, 1671. Talon to Colbert.

[55] AC, C11A, Vol. 13, f. 367. Quebec City, November 10, 1695. Memorandum concerning the pay and pay deductions of the troops in Canada. The first were appointed in 1685, and the minister approved the measure in 1687. The situation was finally regularized in 1722 by a royal ordinance.

[56] AC, series M, Vol. 1031. Memorandum on Canada, unsigned, about 1702.

[57] AC, C11A, Vol. 125, f. 393. Versailles, May 7, 1726. Memorandum to provide advice to the Marquis de Beauharnois.

[58] AC, C11A, Vol. 29, f. 26. Quebec City, November 14, 1708. D'Aigremont to the minister. These comments were made in response to a proposal to establish military companies composed of Amerindians.

[59] It is impossible to claim that the best educated officers in France were unaware of these actions. Detailed summaries were often published in the *Gazette de France*, the official weekly, and the *Mercure Galant*, a very popular monthly. They could also have learned of them from the accounts of the voyages of La Hontan, Bacqueville de la Potherie and others.

[60] *Aventures du chevalier de Beauchêne*, Vol. 1, p. 19 "They were tied to a stake, around which four fires were lit. . . . The Canadians had often threatened to treat these savages in the same way if they did not abolish this barbaric custom and wage better war. . . ."

[61] Kalm, pp. 413-414, 552.

[62] *The Journal of William Pote, Jr., During His Captivity in the French and Indian War from May 1745 to August 1747*, ed. John Fletcher Hurst (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1908), p. 124.

63 AC, C11A, Vol. 30, f. 45. Quebec City, November 14, 1709. *Aventures du chevalier du Beauchêne,* Vol. 1, p. 18, note 1. "This whoop, which the Canadians copied from the savages, was made by striking the hand on the mouth several times."

64 *Relations par lettres de l'Amérique septentrionale* (années 1709 et 1710), p. 8.

65 AC, C11A, Vol. 9, f. 133. Quebec City, October 27, 1687. Denonville to the minister. The extreme west of the island of Montreal is apparently meant, probably Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue.

66 Courville, Sieur de, "Mémoire sur le Canada," RAPQ, 1924-25, p. 103.

67 AC, C11A, Vol. 10, f. 217. Quebec City, November 15, 1689. Frontenac to the minister. Frontenac reported that there were about 200 victims, but more recent studies claim that 24 men were killed at Lachine and about 80 taken prisoner. Some were tortured and others adopted, for 42 were reported missing. Whatever the true number of victims, the shock and horror had a considerable mobilizing effect on the population.

68 Frontenac's interview with the emissary was stormy. According to La Hontan, the Governor was so insulted that Monseigneur de Saint-Vallier and Intendant Champigny attempted to moderate his anger when he wanted to simply hang the emissary in view of the enemy fleet, whom he considered "a collection of bandits, privateers and vagabonds." It was at this time that Frontenac gave his celebrated response, adding "and by gunfire, so that he [Phips] might learn that a man like me is not summoned in this way. . . ." These words were reported by Controller General Monseignat to Madame de Frontenac in November, 1690. AC, C11A, Vol. 11, f. 5.

69 Savage, Thomas, *An Account of the Late Action of the New-Englanders, under the command of Sir William Phips, Against the French at Canada* (London: 1691), p. 12.

70 *A Narrative of an Attempt Made by the French of Canada upon the Mohaques Country being Indians under the Protection of Their Majesties Government of New-York* (New York: William Bradford, 1693),p. 11.

71 The regiments of colonels Seymour, Windress, Kaine and Clayton all suffered losses according to PRO, Colonial Office 5, Vol. 9, f. 20. In his journal, Walker stated that 884 soldiers were lost, but this account is less detailed than the previous source. The British regiments of Colonels Kirke, Hill, Disney and Churchill did not suffer any losses, nor did the artillery or the two American regiments of Colonels Vetch and Walton that had been raised for the expedition. Colonel Grant's British regiment was also assigned to the Walker expedition, but 233 of his soldiers were incorporated into other regiments before leaving England. There was also a detachment of 98 artillerymen and armourers and two engineers under the command of Colonel King of the Board of Ordnance. PRO, Treasury 1, Vol. 132, f. 143 and Vol. 135, f. 15; Royal Artillery Institute, Woolwich (G.B.), *Manuscript Book of Warrants.* The French found many bodies on the shore and on the rocks, among them bodies of women, some of whom still had nursing children. See *The Walker Expedition to Quebec,* 1711, ed. Gerald S. Graham (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1953).

72 "Les commandants et les majors des troupes du détachement de la Marine," BHR, XXXVI (1930), pp. 705-708. These officers are named in the article.

73 AC C11D, Vol. 5, f. 64. Versailles, March 5, 1705. Memoirs of Sieur de Brouillan.

74 AC C11A, Vol. 125, f. 201. Versailles, March 1692. Letters patent for the establishment of the Recollects.

75 Kalm, p. 276.

76 Sometimes soldiers only 5 feet tall (1.62 m) were accepted because recruits were scarce and because "those who [were] 5 feet 1 inch (1.65 m) [demanded] exorbitant sums to sign up." AM, B3, Vol. 363, f. 223. Nantes, July 17, 1734. Dionne to the minister. During the levy of 1749-50, the minister allowed "the recruitment of men 5 ft. tall." Versailles, May 5, 1749. Minister to Commissaire de Rochefort.

77 Depréaux, Albert, *Les Affiches de recrutement du XVIIe siècle à nos jours* (Paris, 1911).

78 Poster of the Corps royal des fusiliers de la Marine (1774-82) which gave "notice to well-proportioned men" that troops were "well dressed, well fed, [saw] the world and [were] well paid." These were certainly the benefits traditionally touted in recruiting Navy and colonial troops. Private collection.

[79] AC, C11B, Vol. 17, f. 296. Louisbourg, October 24, 1736. Trial of Joseph Legrand, known as Picard. This young 16- or 17-year-old soldier was accused of desertion as the result of an administrative error. He was acquitted and allowed to return to the ranks.

[80] AR, 1E, 87, f. 167 [March 1716], Dispatching recruits . . .

[81] J.C.B., *Voyage au Canada dans le nord de l'Amérique septentrionale fait depuis 1751 à 1761*, ed. H.R. Casgrain (Quebec City, 1887). Casgrain suggests J.C.B. was Mr. de Bonnefous, an officer in the Royal-Artillerie Regiment, but he did not come to Canada until 1757. A nominal muster, reproduced in the Papiers Contrecoeur (Quebec City: Université Laval, 1952), has the gunner Charles Bonin, nicknamed Jolicoeur, at Fort Duquesne in 1755. He was the only soldier there to have these initials and this nickname. The J is for Joseph, as for all male Catholics.

[82] One can also calculate 6 livres, 15 sous a month for a total of 81 livres a year like the contemporary authorities who deducted in advance a fixed sum of 2 livres, 5 sous for clothing. In the end, the result was essentially the same and the soldiers were no richer.

[83] In addition, foremen were given an allowance of 16 livres a month. See Vermette, Luce, *La Vie domestique aux forges du Saint-Maurice* (Ottawa: Canadian Parks Service, 1982).

[84] AC, C11A, Vol. 77, f. 27. Quebec City, September 21, 1742. Beauharnois and Hocquart to the minister.

[85] AC, C11A, Vol. 35, f. 15. Quebec City, November 7, 1715, Ramezay and Bégon to the minister.

[86] AC, C11A, Vol. 13, f. 261. Quebec City, November 10, 1695, Frontenac and Champigny to the minister.

[87] Report on the quarters of the Guyenne regiment around 1775, quoted in the *Carnet de la Sabretache* (1903), p. 99. This is a virtually unique report on barracks life during the reign of Louis XV.

[88] J.C.B., p. 39. In addition to artillerymen, grenadiers and cavalrymen slept two to a bed. Until the 1790s, infantrymen in the French army slept three to a bed, then two to a bed during the wars of the Republic and the Empire. Only after Napoleon's defeat in 1815 and the return of the Bourbons did infantrymen gradually acquire individual beds.

[89] AC, C11A, Vol. 13, f. 261. Quebec City, November 10, 1695. Frontenac and Champigny to the minister.

[90] AM, B1, Vol. 9, f. 517. Rochefort, October 31, 1716. M. de l'Épinay to the Navy council. Lafrance, Marc and Desloges, Yvon, *Goûter à l'histoire: les origines de la gastronomie québécoise* (Quebec City: Parks Canada and Chenelière, 1989); Farmer, Denis and Carol, *The King's Bread, 2nd Rising: Cooking at Niagara 1726-1815* (Youngstown, N.Y.: Old Fort Niagara, 1987); Dunton, Hope, *From the Hearth. Recipes from the World of 18th-Century Louisbourg* (Sidney, N.S.: University College of Cape Breton, 1986). For wines, beers and spirits, see the " votre santé" edition of *Cap-aux-diamants*, No. 28, winter 1992. Also see Weathon, Barbara Ketcham, *L'Office et la Bouche: Histoire des moeurs de la table en France 1300-1789* (Paris, Calman-Lévy, 1984).

[91] Boyer, Raymond, *Les Crimes et les Châtiments au Canada français du XVIIe au XIXe siècle* (Montreal: Cercle du livre de France, 1966), pp. 62-63. He provides a long passage from the minutes of the question period to which the soldier Pierre Beaudoin, called Cumberland, was subjected in 1752. It makes almost unbearable reading.

[92] AC, C11A, Vol. 75, f. 222. Quebec City, October 15, 1741. Beauharnois to the minister. This was the case in Montreal in 1741. Two soldiers found guilty of counterfeiting were pursued by the archers but succeeded in escaping because the soldiers guarding the perimeter refused to move.

[93] AC, C11A, Vol. 29, f. 89. June 13, 1708. King's ordinance.

[94] ANQQ, P450/4. Trials in absentia for desertion at Fort Beauséjour in 1751-52. There were six desertions in five months at the fort. This high rate is explained by the closeness of British settlements. There was an increase in the number of desertions after 1750, although it should be remembered that the number of soldiers stationed in Canada almost doubled at this time.

[95] J.C.B., p. 39.

[96] See Lemay, Hugolin, *Vieux papiers, vieilles chansons* (Montreal: Franciscains, 1936); MacMillan, Ernest, *A Canadian Song Book* (Toronto: Dent, 1938); D'Harcourt, Raoul and Marguerite, *Chansons folkloriques françaises au Canada* (Quebec City: Université Laval, 1956); Barbeau, Marius, *Folk Songs from Old Quebec* (Ottawa: National Museum of Canada, 1964). "Malbrough" is the Duke of Marlborough, one of the greatest generals in British military history.

[97] J.C.B., p. 39.

[98] AC, C11A, Vol. 67, f. 176. Quebec City, October 15, 1737. Beauharnois to the minister.

[99] Accusation brought against Marguerite Leboeuf, the owner of this establishment, cited in Boyer, p. 349.

[100] Cited in Lachance, André, *La Vie urbaine en Nouvelle-France* (Montreal: Boréal, 1987), p.59.

[101] AC, C11A, Vol. 87, f. 274, Quebec City, November 3, 1747. La Galissonnière to the minister. He is only repeating what had been said since the time of Champlain.

[102] Kalm, p. 119.

[103] AC, F2C, box 1, f. 55. June, 1722. Marriages of officers and soldiers.

[104] AC, C11A, Vol. 40, f. 164. Quebec City, January 12, 1719. Vaudreuil to the Navy council.

[105] AC, C11A, Vol. 43, f. 131. Quebec City, January 14, 1721. Vaudreuil to the Navy council.

[106] AC, C11A, Vol. 43, f. 320. Quebec City, October 6, 1721. Vaudreuil to the Navy council.

[107] AC, B, Vol. 72, f. 12. Versailles, April 4, 1741. The minister to Beauharnois.

[108] ANQM, Panet, No. 599. September 1, 1757. Inventory of the property of Jacques-René Gauthier, esquire, Sieur de Varennes . . . Captain of the gentlemen [cadets] in the colony.

[109] AC, C11A, Vol. 65, f. 140. Quebec, October 17, 1736. Beauharnois to the minister. This trip to France took place in late 1736 and 1737. Unfortunately, very little of the officers' research has been preserved. Their manuscripts and notes were apparently lost or destroyed in the wars that ravaged New France after 1745.

[110] Guignard, M. de, *L'École de Mars* (Paris: Simart, 1725), 2 vols., I, pp. 686-687.

[111] AC, F2B, Vol. 1, f. 395. "1742. Canada." This is a summary of the officers' roll accompanied by notes about the officers.

[112] La Hontan, pp. 254-255.

[113] AC, B, Vol. 87, f. 4. Marly, January 4, 1748. The minister to La Galissonnière.

[114] Allaire, Gratien, "Officers et marchands: les sociétés de commerce des fourrures, 1715-1760," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française*, XL, 1987, pp. 409-428.

[115] Franquet, pp. 15-16.

[116] AC, C11A, Vol. 13, f. 178. Montreal, September 28, 1694. Memorandum of La Mothe-Cadillac.

[117] Challes, Robert, *Journal d'un voyage fait aux Indes orientales* (1690-1691), ed. Frédéric Deloffre (Paris: Mercure de France, 1979), p. 215. Despite the title, the author also relates the story of his capture in Acadia in 1687.

[118] In contrast to "Russian service," customary since the last century, in which plates were brought to the table one after the other. Various passages discuss this in: Courtin, Antoine de, *Nouveau traité sur la civilité qui se pratique en France parmi les honnêtes gens* (Paris: 1695) and in *La Civilité puérile et honnête* by "a missionary" (1749). Lengthy passages from these books and from several others on this subject are reproduced in Franklin, Alfred, *La Vie privée d'autrefois: les repas* (Paris: Plon, 1889). It appears that lapses in good manners were unpardonable! This was learned the hard way in 1715 by an imposter, who claimed to be a marquis, but gave himself away by using a fork to serve himself olives during a dinner with the commandant of the port troops of Bayonne.

[119] AC, C11A, Vol. 35, f. 3. Quebec City, November 13, 1715. Ramezay and Bégon to the minister. He only escaped his punishment by fleeing to New England. Later, witnesses came forward to testify that the victim had said, before dying, that she was the aggressor and that she pardoned him. As a result, the Chevalier was exonerated.

[120] AC, C11A, Vol. 13, f. 283. Quebec City, November 4, 1695. Frontenac to the minister.

[121] Quoted in Cloarec, Alain, "L'Ordre royal et militaire de Saint-Louis & l'institution du mérite militaire," *Art & Curiosité*, Paris, November-December, 1975, p. 22. There were certain orders such as the Order of Saint Michel or of the Saint Esprit which admitted only leading personages from the court of the King. See Marchal, Charles and Michel, Sophie, "Les ordres du roi," *Art & Curiosité*, Paris, November-December 1981. The French officers who served in the Order of Malta were allowed to wear the cross of Malta. They were almost always officers on ships or galleys. We found only one knight of Malta among the troops in Canada, the Marquis de Crisafy, who died in 1696. Decorations from lesser-known orders of knighthood were not recognized by the king, as Sieur Walon discovered in 1731, when he was forbidden to wear the cross of the Order of Saint Jean de Latran by Governor General Beauharnois. See AC, C11A, Vol. 54, f. 422.

[122] AC, C11A, Vol. 89, f. 230. Quebec City, November 8, 1747. Saint-Simon to the minister.

[123] Archives of the Séminaire de Québec, *Saberdache rouge*, Vol. M1, No. 26, p. 66. Regulation requested of the Governor General by the priest of Varennes to ensure order during the Corpus Christi procession, June 1, 1756. The captains were not always very strict regarding innkeepers, for the priest complained that people in the past had gotten drunk "too many times . . . which was very scandalous for religion."

[124] Not to be confused with his younger brother Philippe, who replaced Louis in 1692, when Louis was promoted to the rank of ensign.

[125] BL, Stowe Manuscripts, Vol. 463. *Journal of Engineer Michael Richards*, 1696-97. The number of soldiers is taken from the embarcation returns of the regiment given in BL, Additional Manuscripts, Vol. 15 492, f. 22; Daniell, David Scott, *Cap of Honour: The Story of the Gloucestershire Regiment* (28th/61st) 1694-1950 (London: Harrap, 1951), p. 18. These soldiers wore a red uniform faced with yellow.

[126] AC, C11D, Vol. 6, f. 19. Port-Royal, June 26, 1707. Subercase to the minister. He asked to send them uniforms "like those of the port bombardiers," but nothing happened as a result of this request.

[127] *Mercure Galant*, February 1706, p. 85. It is not mentioned whether these were French or Spanish Basques, probably because both Spain and France were then at war with England. A tapabord is a kind of cloth cap with flaps to cover the ears. They were very popular in Canada at the time.

[128] *The Deplorable State of New-England by Reason of a Covetous and Treacherous Governour . . . To which is added, An Account of the Shameful Miscariage of the Late Expedition against Port-Royal* (Boston, 1708).

[129] AR, 1E, Vol. 101, f. 293. Versailles, March 7, 1723. L.A. de Bourbon to Karrer.

[130] PRO, State Papers 42, Vol. 38, f. 225. Plan to attack Halifax (1755). It was noted that the Rangers did not live in Halifax. In regard to the "riffraff," this observation about the Mohicans might indicate that they replaced the Mohawks in the early 1750s and that colonists and white adventurers familiar with the forest were recruited. After 1752, command was taken over by Joseph Goreham, the brother of John, who had died in London in December 1751. According to Drake, p. 128.

[131] AC, C11A, Vol. 96, f. 5. Quebec City, August 20, 1750. Bigot to the minister.

[132] "Correspondance de Madame Bégon," letter of October 1, 1752, RAPQ, 1934-35, p. 178.

[133] Musée du Séminaire de Québec, Archives historiques, Papiers Surlaville.

[134] AC, C11A, Vol., Vol. 3, f. 254. Quebec City, November 2, 1672. Frontenac to the minister.

[135] This "Great Peace" was the result of years of very difficult negotiations among the French, their Iroquois enemies, and their allies along the Great Lakes, especially the Ottawas. We can only give a very simplified outline of the treaty of 1701 here. See Gilles Havard, *La Grande Paix de Montréal de 1701: les voies de la diplomatie franco-amérindienne*, (Montreal: Recherches amérindiennes au Québec, 1992).

[136] It is not known exactly where this fort was, although it was about 160 km south of Lake Michigan in the present state of Illinois. The Foxes' forts were remarkable structures, with double palisades, an earth parapet and a ditch. See Peyser, Joseph L., "The Fate of the Fox Survivors: A Dark Chapter in the History of the French in the Upper Country, 1726-1737," *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, Vol. 73, No. 2, winter 1989-90, pp. 83-110.

[137] On July 6, 1739, there were 11 officers, including the commandant, one chaplain, one surgeon, 24 cadets (of whom 11 were aiguillette cadets and 13 soldier cadets), 39 soldiers, 45 militiamen, and 319 Amerindians (of whom 186 were allied Iroquois established with two missionaries near Montreal). AC, C13A, Vol. 24, f. 299.

[138] Massachusetts proclamation of 1746 cited in Drake, Samuel G., *A Particular History of the Five Years French and Indian War* (Albany: Munsell, 1870), pp.134-135. The scalps of children were worth £19 and children taken prisoner were sold back for £20. In addition, the scalps of children over 12 years of age were worth £38 and the prisoners themselves £40. This very slight difference between the value of scalps and prisoners amounted to a veiled invitation to kill those captured.

CHRONOLOGY OF MAJOR BATTLES 1000-1754

This chronology is not exhaustive, but provides a list of the most important battles, inside and outside Canada, from the year 1000 to 1754.

c. 1000
The Vikings attacked natives, killing eight of the people they called *Skraelings*, probably in Labrador. The natives counter-attacked, and Thorvald, the Viking chief, was killed. A few years later, a Viking colony, possibly in Newfoundland, repulsed a Skraeling attack. The settlement was abandoned, however, a few months later.

1541-42
Charlesbourg-Royal. Iroquoians attacked the French spending the winter with Jacques Cartier in Charlesbourg-Royal (Cap-Rouge, Quebec).

1554
Battles between French and Spanish Basque vessels off the coast of Labrador.

1577 (summer)
Battle in Frobisher Bay between Inuit warriors and the English expedition led by Martin Frobisher.

1606 (summer)
Battles between Frenchmen and Amerindians near Stage Harbour, Massachusetts.

1609 (July 30)
Champlain and some Frenchmen took part in an attack on the Iroquois by the Algonquins and Montagnais near Crown Point, on Lake Champlain. Champlain killed two Iroquois chiefs with his harquebus, and the other warriors fled.

1610 (June 19)
Champlain accompanied some Montagnais and Algonquins along the "Iroquois" River (Richelieu). They beat off an Iroquois attack.

1612
Battles between Spanish Basques and Peter Easton, an English pirate, at Harbour Grace, Newfoundland.

1613 (July)
Samuel Argall, who had sailed from Virginia with 60 men and 14 cannons, destroyed the Habitations of Saint-Sauveur and Port-Royal in Acadia.

1615 (October 11-12)
Champlain, a few Frenchmen and some Huron, Algonquin and Montagnais warriors laid siege to a Seneca fort south of Lake Ontario in the Oswego region, without success.

1628 (July)
The Kirke brothers, English privateers, captured a French fleet sailing for Quebec City with colonists and provisions. About 1,200 cannon shots were fired on July 17th and 18th near Barnabé Island in the St. Lawrence. As a result, Champlain surrendered Quebec City without a struggle on July 19, 1629.

1629
In the spring, the English captured a French fishing vessel at Port-aux-Baleines, on Cape Breton Island. They built a habitation, which was in turn taken on September 18th by the French captain Daniel. In the meantime, the Scot William Alexander seized Port-Royal.

1641 (June)
A skirmish between the Iroquois and Governor Montmagny near Trois-Rivières marked the beginning of a new French-Iroquois war.

1642 (August 20)
Three hundred Iroquois attacked Fort Richelieu (Sorel), then under construction, but were repulsed by the small garrison of about 40 soldiers. The fort was abandoned in 1646 and burned down by the Iroquois in 1647.

1644 (March 30)
Battle at Ville-Marie (Montreal) pitting Maisonneuve, accompanied by 30 men, against 80 Iroquois. Maisonneuve was forced to withdraw.

1649-50
Destruction of Huronia by the Iroquois. The Huron, Neutral and Petun nations were scattered. Of a population of 12,000, about 3,000 were massacred or captured, 2,000 surrendered to the enemy, and 400 took refuge first on Orléans Island and then at Lorette. The others scattered over the western territories.

1652 (October 14)
Near Montreal, Major Lambert Closse and 34 men repulsed about 200 Iroquois.

1654 (August 30)
A group of 250 Ottawas, who had come to trade for the first time on the St. Lawrence, was attacked by about 120 Mohawks.

1660 (May 2-15)
Dollard des Ormeaux and his 16 companions, helped by four Algonquins and 40 Hurons, were overwhelmed by 700 Iroquois at Long-Sault on the Ottawa River (Carillon, Quebec).

1666 (September)
Tracy, Courcelles and Salières entered Iroquois country with 700 soldiers, 400 Canadian volunteers and about 100 Hurons and Algonquins, burning four Iroquois villages as well as the crops of their inhabitants.

1682-89
Iroquois guerilla warfare against the French and their Amerindian allies.

1686 (spring)
The Chevalier de Troye and the Le Moyne brothers (d'Iberville, Sainte-Hélène and Maricourt), leading 30 soldiers and 70 Canadians, captured the English forts of Moose Factory (renamed Saint-Louis), Rupert or Charles House (renamed Saint-Jacques) and Albany (Sainte-Anne) on Hudson Bay.

1687 (July)
Denonville, with 800 soldiers, 1,100 militiamen and 400 Amerindians, ravaged Seneca country, thereby preventing the Iroquois and English from taking over control of the fur trade from the French.

(November 3)
A raid by 100 to 200 Iroquois was repelled at Fort Chambly.

1689 (August 4-5)
One thousand five hundred Iroquois attacked Lachine, killing 24 and taking about 80 prisoners.

1689 (September)
Du Luth, d'Ailleboust and 28 Canadians defeated 22 Iroquois at Lac des Deux-Montagnes.

1690 (March-April)
Three different expeditions composed of Canadians and Amerindians attacked and destroyed villages in New England. They were led by d'Ailleboust de Manthet and Le Moyne de Sainte-Hélène at Corlaer (Schenectady); by Hertel de Rouville at Salmon Falls; and by Portneuf and Courtemanche, assisted by Saint-Castin, at Casco (Portland, Maine).

(May)
William Phips, with three ships and 446 soldiers and officers, captured Pentagouet and Port-Royal.

(June 2)
La Porte de Louvigny, with 143 voyageurs and 30 soldiers, defeated an Iroquois band at Lac des Chats.

(August)
D'Iberville, with three ships, took Fort New Severn, commanded by Thomas Walsh.

(October)
Phips, with 34 ships and 2,300 militiamen, attacked Quebec City. Frontenac responded "through the muzzle of [his] cannons." Phips withdrew with considerable losses.

1690-97
Iroquois raids on French settlements between Montreal and Trois-Rivières.

1691 (August)
A raid led by Major Peter Schuyler with 300 militiamen and Iroquois was repulsed at Laprairie.

1692 (June 7)
Vaudreuil, with a detachment of soldiers, Canadians and Amerindians surprised and annihilated 40 Iroquois at Repentigny.

(October 22)
Young Madeleine de Verchères held out for three days against Iroquois besieging Fort Verchères. She used a ruse to give the impression that the fort was defended by a strong garrison, whereas in fact she was there with only two soldiers, one servant, her two young brothers and a few women.

1692
Frenchmen and Abenakis beat off an English attack on Fort Naxouat or Saint-Joseph (Fredericton, New Brunswick).

1693 (January-February)
Three Iroquois villages north of Albany were attacked and destroyed by the French.

(June 22)
James Knight recaptured Fort Albany from the French.

1694 (July)
Captain Claude-Sébastien de Villieu, assisted by 200 Abenakis, ravaged several English settlements in New Hampshire.

(September-October)
Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville and his brother, Le Moyne de Sérigny, with two ships, besieged and recaptured Fort York on Hudson Bay. This post, previously commanded by Thomas Walsh, was retaken by the English in 1696.

1696 (August)
Frontenac, Callières and Ramezay, with 2,000 soldiers, militiamen and Amerindians, destroyed an evacuated Onondaga village and its entire crop, near Oswego. Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville, with two ships and the support of 240 Abenakis under Saint-Castin and 25 soldiers under Villieu, attacked Fort Pemaquid (William Henry, Maine), defended by only 95 men under the command of Pascoe Chubb. Chubb capitulated on August 15.

(October)
Major Benjamin Church, with 400 men and 50 Amerindians, besieged Fort Naxouat. Villebon, with about 100 Frenchmen as well as some allied Amerindians, succeeded in repulsing the attack.

(November to March, 1697)
Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville and Jacques François de Mombeton de Brouillan, commandant of Plaisance, seized St. John's and all English posts in Newfoundland, with the exception of Bonavista and Carbonear Island.

1697 (September 5)
Naval encounter near Fort York on Hudson Bay between the *Pelican*, commanded by d'Iberville, and three English ships. The *Hampshire* and *Hudson Bay* were sunk. Only the *Dering* succeeded in escaping. Fort York was taken by the French shortly thereafter.

An English attack on Fort Naxouat was repulsed.

1704 (February)
Jean-Baptiste Hertel de Rouville, with 50 Canadians and 200 Amerindians, destroyed Deerfield, Massachusetts.

(summer)
La Grange, with 100 Canadians and two boats, seized a frigate and burned two ships at Bonavista.

(July)
The French governor of Port-Royal, Brouillan, repulsed a fleet of three warships, 14 transport ships and 36 smaller boats carrying 550 men under the command of Colonel Benjamin Church.

1705 (February)
Subercase, with 450 Canadians and Micmacs, seized Bay Bulls and Petit Havre, but failed to capture the fort of St. John's, defended by Lieutenants Moody and Latham. Montigny captured the post of Bonavista.

1707
An English fleet, led by Major Lloyd, ravaged the St. Malo fishing stations in Newfoundland between Cape Freels and the Strait of Belle Isle.

(June and August)
On two occasions in June and August, expeditions from New England attacked Port-Royal, but without success. Port-Royal was defended by Subercase and a small garrison, along with Saint-Castin's son and some Abenakis.

1708 (August 29)
Jean-Baptiste Hertel de Rouville, Jean-Baptiste de Saint-Ours Deschaillons and 200 men attacked and destroyed the village of Haverhill, Massachusetts. On the way back, they repelled an attack by 60 men under the command of Captain Ayer.

(December)
Captain Joseph de Saint-Ovide with 170 Frenchmen, Canadians and Amerindians captured St. John's, Newfoundland. The garrison surrendered on January 1, 1709.

1710 (October 13)
Governor Subercase and the 150 soldiers defending Port-Royal capitulated to Colonel Francis Nicholson, who had sailed from New England with a fleet of 36 ships carrying 3,600 men, including 600 regular soldiers.

1712 (May)
The Foxes, a nation from west of Lake Michigan, attempted to seize the post of Detroit, near which they had recently settled. The Ottawas and Illinois helped Dubuisson and about 20 soldiers to counterattack, defeating the Foxes.

1716 (August)
Captain Louis La Porte de Louvigny, with 225 soldiers and militiamen as well as a number of Amerindians, attacked the Foxes in their homeland of Wisconsin, obtaining a surrender.

1722 (summer)
Amerindians surrounded Annapolis Royal, but failed to dislodge the British garrison.

1728 (August)
Governor General Beauharnois sent an army of 400 Frenchmen and 800 Amerindians, under the command of Constant Le Marchand de Lignery, after the Foxes. Although their villages and crops were burned, the Foxes succeeded in escaping.

1730 (August-September)
Saint-Ange, an officer from Louisiana; Villiers, commandant of Fort Saint Joseph; and Noyelles, commandant of Fort Miami, combined their French and Amerindian forces in order to attack and destroy the main Fox village.

1733 (September)
The Foxes allied themselves with the Sauks (Sacs), and attacked and killed Villiers along with several other Frenchmen.

1735 (April)
A French and Amerindian expedition under Noyelles attacked the Foxes and Sauks in their fort on the Des Moines River, in Iowa. After a few skirmishes, a treaty was concluded.

1740 (February 22)
Céléron de Blainville, with about 100 soldiers and Canadian militiamen as well as 200 Amerindian allies, successfully attacked the Chickasaws, near the present city of Memphis, Tennessee. The Chickasaws signed a peace treaty.

1744 (May)
Naval expedition from Louisbourg, led by du Vivier. With 344 men, he captured and destroyed Canso, Nova Scotia, which was defended by 120 soldiers under the command of Captain Patrick Heron.

(August)
Du Vivier laid siege to Annapolis Royal with 50 soldiers and about 200 Amerindians. De Gannes, the commandant of Louisbourg, put an end to the attack and the French withdrew.

1745 (May-June)
Louisbourg was captured by a force of more than 4,000 New England militiamen, under the command of William Pepperell. Governor Duchambon surrendered after a siege of 47 days, together with 1,500 men, some from the Compagnies franches de la Marine, and a detachment from Karrer's Swiss Regiment, as well as canonniers-bombardiers and militiamen.

(November 29)
Lieutenant Paul Marin, leading 400 Frenchmen and 200 Abenakis and Micmacs, destroyed Saratoga, capturing 100 men.

1746 (July)
An American expedition against Île Saint-Jean (Prince Edward Island) was defeated near Port La Joie by a French garrison consisting of about 15 soldiers and 100 Micmacs.

(August)
Rigaud de Vaudreuil, with 400 militiamen and 300 Amerindians, captured Fort Massachusetts (Adams, Massachusetts) and its garrison of 22 men.

1747 (February 12)
Coulon de Villiers, Louis de la Corne, and a detachment of 236 Canadians and 50 Micmacs attacked Grand Pré (Nova Scotia), which was occupied by a regiment from Massachusetts. The Americans surrendered.

(March)
The Chevalier de Niverville burned five forts and 100 houses that had been abandoned by their inhabitants near Haverhill, Massachusetts.

(April)
A French raid on Fort No. 4 (Charlestown, New Hampshire) was repulsed.

(June)
Luc La Corne de Saint-Luc, with about 20 soldiers and militiamen and about 200 Amerindians, attacked Fort Clinton (near Easton, New York).

(June 20)
Lieutenant Chew and about 100 American volunteers were defeated by the French and taken to Fort Saint-Frédéric as prisoners.

1748 (July 5)
Lunnenburg (now Ashby, Massachusetts) was stormed by a Canadian expedition.

(July 18)
About 70 American militiamen were attacked near Schenectady and withdrew after losing about 30 men.

1752 (June 21)
At Pickawillany (Pica, Ohio), 250 Amerindian allies, under the cadet Mouët de Langlade, attacked the Miami band led by Chief Memeskia, who was friendly with the British. Eight Ango-American traders were captured.

1754 (May 28)
Washington, with about 400 Americans and Amerindians, attacked Enseign Jumonville. Jumonville, leading 32 Canadians, had come to deliver a demand that Washington leave French territory.

(July 3)
Coulon de Villiers, brother of Jumonville, attacked Washington at Fort Necessity with 600 Frenchmen and 100 Amerindians. The fort was defended by 400 men with nine cannons. Washington capitulated.

OTHER NAVY TROOPS

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Ministry of the Navy was responsible for ocean-going sailing warships, the galleys in the Mediterranean, defence of the French coast, and managing the defence of the colonies. As a result, the Navy maintained troops not only in North America but also in France and the West Indies.

COMPAGNIES FRANCHES DE LA MARINE (WARSHIPS)

There is now considerable confusion with regard to the Compagnies franches de la Marine. The obvious reason is that this name applied to both troops serving on ships and those serving in the colonies. A source of further confusion is that contemporary records often speak of Navy "detachments." Many historians have concluded, naturally enough, that a single corps, based in France, occasionally sent detachments of soldiers to serve in the colonies. In fact, two different corps were involved.

The confusion does not end there. Until 1671, the French Navy occasionally raised regiments to serve on its ships. Their names indicated their origin: "La Marine," "Royal-Vaisseaux," or "Royal-Marine." However, at the insistence of the War minister Louvois, all regiments were transferred to the army, including regiments with "naval" names, even though they may not have actually performed any functions of that nature thereafter. The minister of the Navy, Colbert, then persuaded Louis XIV to authorize the raising of soldiers organized in "compagnies franches," that is, independent companies which were not part of any regiment. During the 1670s and 80s, companies of marines were raised and commissioned as needed. Then, on December 16, 1690, the Compagnies franches de la Marine were created to provide this service on a permanent basis. They were assigned to all the naval ports in France, and each company detached soldiers to serve on warships. Men from these companies took part in all naval battles and in many landings. They served under d'Iberville during his maritime expeditions. During periods of peace, their numbers fell to as few as 3,000 men, but soared to 10,000 during wartime. These Compagnies franches de la Marine serving on ships were dissolved on November 5, 1761.

The soldiers in these companies were armed at first with swords and matchlock muskets with bayonets. The matchlock muskets gradually gave way to flintlock muskets during the 1690s. Beginning in the 1680s, the soldiers wore grey-white uniforms with blue cuffs, linings, waistcoats, breeches, and stockings, and pewter buttons, which began to be made of brass in the early eighteenth century.

NAVY BOMBARDIERS

The Navy required its own artillery personnel, distinct from that of the army. There were artillery commissaries in the Navy and schools for apprentice gunners in several ports. The invention of bomb ketches in the early 1680s led to the creation of a specialized corps of "Bombardiers de la Marine" or Navy Bombardiers. These artillerymen operated the mortars on these ships. The first company was raised in Toulon in 1682, the second in Brest in 1692, and the third in Rochefort in 1694. Beginning in the early eighteenth century, a few bombardiers were detached to the colonies. One was sent to Port-Royal in Acadia in 1702, then to Île Royale, where he eventually became an artillery assistant in 1716. A detachment served in Louisiana in 1740, and another formed the second company of colonial gunner-bombardiers in Louisbourg in 1758. They wore red uniforms faced with blue. They were incorporated into the army artillery in 1761.

GALLEY TROOPS

The galleys, based at Marseille, were actually floating prisons. The rowers were all sorts of prisoners who had been "sentenced to the royal galleys." These vessels served above all to protect France's coastline and its trade on the Mediterranean against Arab pirates based in northern Africa. The number of galleys soared from six in 1661 to a high of 40 in 1690, before falling back to 15 and remaining at this level after the death of Louis XIV, who had been particularly fond of the galleys. By 1748, the galley fleet had become ineffective and was abolished.

A company of soldiers was assigned to each galley to serve as its "garrison." The number of men in these "Compagnies franches des Galères" varied enormously depending on the number of galleys in service. Their weapons were similar to those of the Compagnies franches for warships. Under Louis XV, their uniforms were grey-white with red cuffs, linings, waistcoats, breeches and stockings, and brass buttons.

The "Pertuisaniers des Galères" were men assigned to guarding the prisoners, both on land and at sea. This occupation was rather despised, but it was essential to ensure security on the galleys and to free up the soldiers during battles. An ordinance of 1695 set their numbers at eight per ship. They wore blue uniforms faced with red "with deerskin sword-belts and a sabre."[1]

NAVY TROOPS IN THE WEST INDIES

Apart from the troops it sent to New France (Canada, Île Royale, and Louisiana), the Ministry of the Navy maintained a small colonial army in the West Indies and Guyana. In the West Indies, only a general government existed at first "for the islands of America." However, in 1714 the French West Indies were divided into two administrative zones: the "Windward Islands" (Martinique, Guadeloupe, Dominica, Grenada and Guyana) and "Saint-Domingue," today known as Haiti.

The first colonial troops of the Compagnies franches de la Marine were sent to Martinique in 1674 in response to a Dutch attack. The garrison numbered about 500 men until 1750, when the number of companies doubled from 10 to 20. After 1724, the garrison also included 200 men from Karrer's Swiss Regiment. A company of canonniers-bombardiers was sent to the Windward Islands in 1747. The Compagnies franches de la Marine de la Guyane arrived in 1677. Most of these men were stationed at Fort Louis de Cayenne. The Guyana garrison increased gradually from 150 to 500 soldiers between 1677 and the mid-eighteenth century.

The first two Compagnies franches de la Marine de Saint-Domingue were established in Haiti in 1690. In 1732, the garrison of this flourishing colony comprised 16 companies with a total of 800 soldiers, which increased to 34 companies by 1750. This did not include about 400 soldiers of Karrer's Swiss Regiment and a company of canonniers-bombardiers raised in 1745. In all, about 2,300 officers and soldiers were distributed over a very small area compared to Canada. However, Haiti was then "the pearl of the Antilles," the richest of the colonies; and it was provided with a defensive system that remained effective until the French Revolution.

The arms, equipment and uniforms of these troops were practically identical to those in New France. During the 1690s, matchlock muskets were replaced by flintlock muskets. Some alterations were also made to the uniform in deference to the climate. The troops were given linen coats instead of woollen waistcoats, as well as linen knee breeches and cotton stockings. In the 1720s, linen gaiters were adopted.

[1] AM, A1, vol. 32, No. 14. Versailles, 16 February 1695. King's regulation regarding the "pertuisaniers des galères."

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The text and illustrations in this book are based on many different sources. The following bibliography is not exhaustive, but rather a guide to the main sources. The collections of artifacts at many historical sites and museums were also studied. Most of them are mentioned in the captions to the illustrations.

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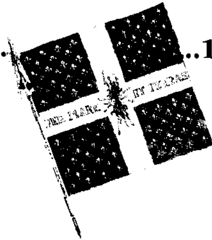

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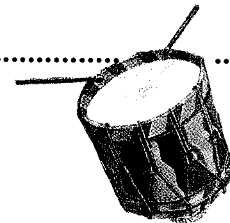

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