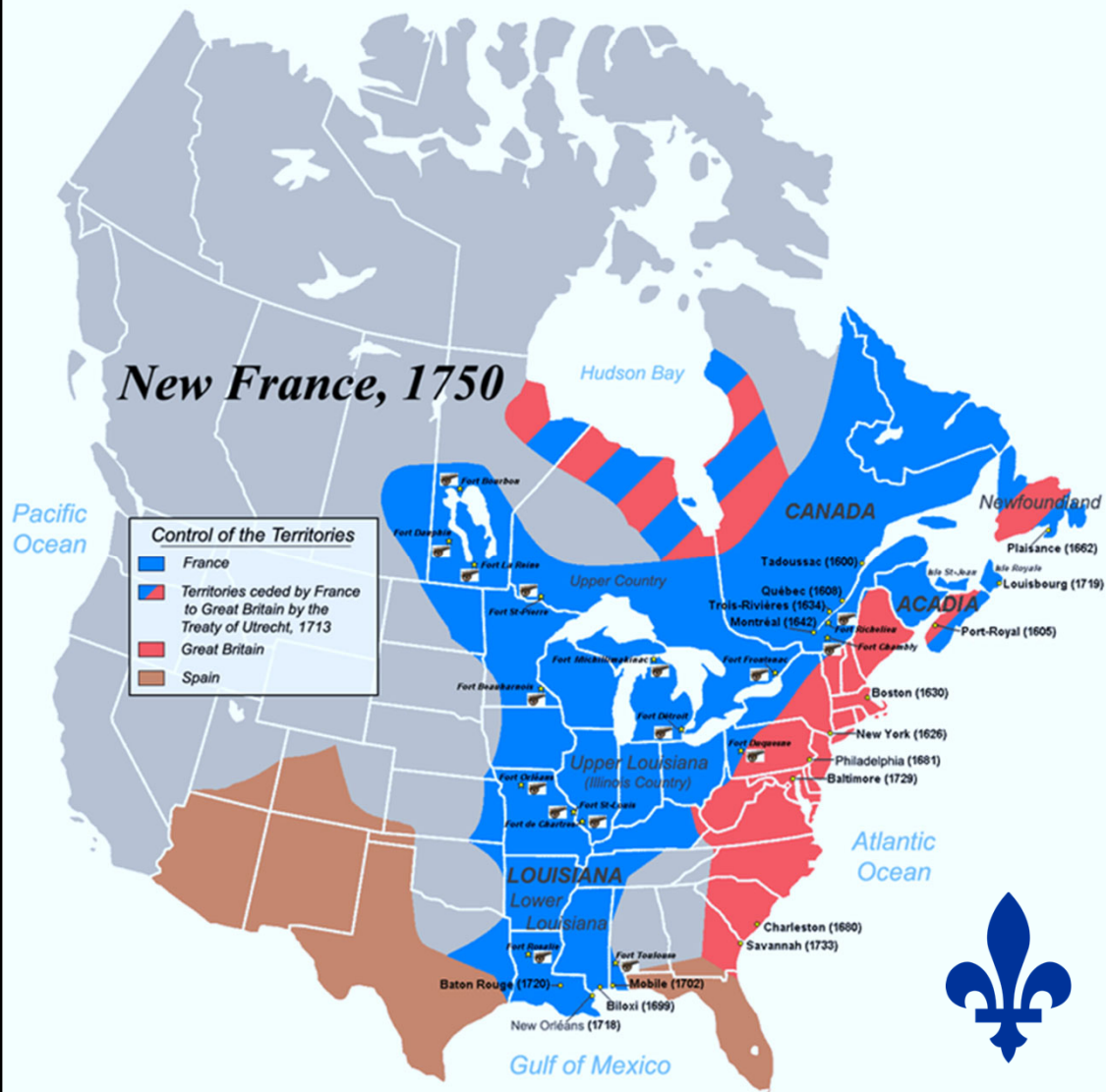


NEW FRANCE



Established by the French in 1534, New France was the first permanent European colony on Canadian soil. It was located in what is now Québec. New France was founded during a period of intense international exploration by Europeans, and the French secured the territory in order to cultivate the land's resources. For example, plentiful arable land was one of the most attractive prospects of North America, as Europe was overcrowded and it was difficult for the average citizen to own land. Industries such as farming, fishing, whaling, and the fur trade made the territory profitable for France.



Due to its harsh climate and unfamiliar wildlife, the settlers of New France relied heavily upon the indigenous populations of the area to help them survive both the frigid winters and the sicknesses that came with being in a new environment. Women were also integral to the survival of New France's population, as they were often responsible for the cooking and crafting of sewn materials for their families. Given that supplies sometimes took months to arrive in New France from Europe, the resourcefulness of these women would have been integral to the community's prosperity. Les Filles du Roi, crown-sponsored women who came to New France in order to raise the female population in the settlement, were particularly significant in that they were able to choose their own husbands, and convinced workers who had finished their work contracts in New France to remain there permanently. New France remained relatively stable until it was captured by the British during the Conquest of 1760.