

## Aboriginal Peoples circa 1740

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### Abstract

This map shows the distribution of Aboriginal peoples early in the eighteenth century after a hundred years of Aboriginal-European contact at the time of the French Regime. Ethnohistorical societies are identified on the map by the major linguistic family to which they belong. Ethnohistorical societies are Aboriginal peoples that were known by name and location to Europeans early in the eighteenth century. A linguistic family code identifies each ethnohistorical society on the map and is used to reference specific information for each ethnohistorical society.

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ABORIGINAL PEOPLES IN CANADA circa 1740 represents a temporal cross-section of the Aboriginal population early in the eighteenth century. The year 1740 was selected for this map because it represents one hundred and fifty years of Aboriginal-European contact at the height of the French Regime. Good manuscript and printed map coverage for New France and Hudson Bay, along with contemporary population estimates, are available for this period.

Population data for 1740 is based on censuses conducted by the French in 1739 to 1741 in order to assess the number of warriors within their alliance system. On the basis of these, as well as other estimates, it is likely that the Aboriginal population depicted on the Canadian portion of this map stood at about 45 000 people. Based on the late 18th and 19th century data, and making allowances for the ravages of diseases and war, it is likely that the total aboriginal population of Canada in 1740 did not exceed 200 000.

### Distribution and Location of Aboriginal Peoples circa 1740

The distribution and location of ethnohistorical societies circa 1740 shows the changes in the distribution of Aboriginal peoples which took place between the time of first European contact to the height of the French Regime in New France. At its height the French were the major influence in both the east and the central interior of present day Canada.

Changes in the distribution of Aboriginal peoples during the period 1630 to 1740 can best be described in a series of time periods.

- Aboriginal Distributions 1630 to 1653
- Aboriginal Distributions 1660 to 1670
- Aboriginal Distributions 1680 to 1701
- Aboriginal Distributions 1702 to 1740
- Aboriginal Distributions 1740

These changes can be attributed to several factors, principal among them were the spread of epidemic diseases, warfare, and the repercussions of European settlement and imperial commercial rivalries.

### **Aboriginal Distributions 1630 to 1653**

The repeated outbreak of influenza, measles and smallpox had a devastating effect on Canada's indigenous population. Indeed, seventeenth century observations suggest that deaths from these diseases resulted in a decline of between one-half and two-thirds of the Aboriginal population of eastern North America during the first one hundred years of European contact.

Another principal factor that had an impact on the Aboriginal population was warfare. Warfare had been part of Aboriginal life before European contact. In eastern Canada some of the Montagnais, Algonquin and all the Huron were allied against the Iroquois.



An unsuccessful attack by the French and Huron allies on an Iroquois (either Onondaga or Oneida) Village south-east of Lake Ontario.

**Source:** Library and Archives Canada / C-005749

In order to settle peacefully among these people and establish trade relations, the French were obliged to join the northern alliance while the Dutch (and after 1664, the English) sided with the Iroquois. By the 1640s, Aboriginal warfare had become more destructive. Bent on increasing their population losses by absorbing the Ontario Iroquoian groups and extending their hunting ranges, the Iroquois, armed with Dutch muskets, destroyed the northern alliance (1640 to 1653). These wars resulted in a significant drop in population, the disappearance and amalgamation of some groups and a radical shift in the distribution of most of the remainder.

## Aboriginal Distributions 1660 to 1670

By the late 1660s, the French had re-established missionary and trading contacts with refugee groups now in the Lake Michigan-Superior area. Over time these groups became bound to New France through alliances. At the same time an effort was made to neutralize the Iroquois through diplomacy (1654 to 1658) and war (1666).

The Iroquois peace of 1667 permitted the return of many of the Algonquian groups who had fled westward in 1650 to 1653. Their return was hastened in 1670 when the Dakota retaliated against Huron-Petun-Ottawa attempts to take some of their hunting territory. Although French trade in the interior was officially illegal during this period French coureurs-de-bois reached the western Great Lakes and began to trade directly with Aboriginal groups.



Rival fur traders racing to an Indian camp

**Source:** Courtesy of Remington / National Archives of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario / C-747.

The fur trade, as it was pursued by the French, was largely dependent on peaceful Aboriginal relations and traditional Aboriginal ways of life. Both the fur trade and conventional Aboriginal lifestyles were dependent on the exploitation of a wilderness. European settlement, however, was an agent that transformed the wilderness and was therefore incompatible with the fur trade.

The conflicts that ensued as a result of these opposing interests were aggravated by European views (particularly among the Dutch and English) that saw no place for Aboriginal groups settled in their midst. On the east coast, the expansion of Dutch and English settlement precipitated either the destruction or the permanent dislocation of Aboriginal groups. Some were absorbed by their more resilient neighbours, while others drifted west into the Ohio area or north to the St. Lawrence. On Newfoundland, the Beothuk were gradually forced into the interior of the island, away from their coastal resources.

On the other hand, French settlements in Acadia and the St. Lawrence were located in areas that had been uninhabited by Aboriginal groups or, at the most, only seasonally occupied. The fact that settlement in New France did not have the same

disruptive impact on Aboriginal lands, coupled with a mutual economic interest in the fur trade, permitted the French to establish better relations with their Aboriginal neighbours.

### **Aboriginal Distributions 1680 to 1701**

Another transformation of Aboriginal geography began in the 1680s. Encouraged by the English, the resurgent Iroquois renewed war against the French and their Aboriginal allies, disrupting the southern frontier of New France, while on its northern frontier, growing competition from the Hudson's Bay Company was making itself felt. In the interior, rival French traders were agitating for a solution that would lead to an equitable distribution of the fur trade. Faced with these problems, France finally decided to take action.



Ojibway Indians shooting the rapids, by Frederick Arthur Verner (1836 to 1928)

**Source:** Courtesy of National Archives of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario / C114480.

In 1681 the interior fur trade was legalized through a permit system, and in 1686 the English posts on James Bay were taken by military action. The fur trade became firmly entrenched in the hands of the French as the number of posts under their control increased. Furs began to flood into Montreal, creating a glut of beaver on the market by 1690s.

Military action against the Iroquois began in 1687 with an attack on the Seneca. Warriors from virtually every French allied Aboriginal group took part in this campaign. Following retaliatory Iroquois raids on their settlements, the French launched further attacks on the Iroquois in 1693 (Mohawk) and 1697 (Onondaga and Oneida).

Deserted by the English, who had made a separate peace with France (1697), the Iroquois finally signed a treaty of neutrality in 1701. This marked an end to major French-Iroquois hostilities until the Seven Years War.

With the costly Iroquois wars at an end, the frontier at peace, and the glut of beaver that had accumulated over the years, France decided to close most of its interior posts in 1696. The founding of Detroit in 1701 as the major French post in the

interior, the outbreak of hostilities with the Dakota and the Iroquois peace of 1701, led to a major shift of Aboriginal groups into the vacant lands of southern Ontario and the Wabash-Maumee River-Detroit area.

In the north, some groups gravitated to the north shore of Lake Superior to trade at Albany on James Bay, retaken by the English in 1693. The Ojibwa, who managed to maintain good relations with the Dakota, began their westward migration along the south shore of Lake Superior.

### **Aboriginal Distributions 1702 to 1740**

War between England and France broke out again in 1702 and ended with the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. The Treaty stipulated that the lower Great Lakes-Ohio area be open to the trade of both nations and that a commission settle the bounds between New France, the eastern English colonies and the English on Hudson Bay. New France was in danger of losing the North American interior if Aboriginal trade were to continue unchecked to Hudson Bay, and to the itinerant Iroquois and English traders in the lower Great Lakes-Ohio area.

The French moved quickly to reopen and extend their string of posts. As a result, all southern posts were garrisoned, and their commandants instructed to maintain Aboriginal alliances with lavish gifts, and use force if necessary.

Further to the northwest, the Assiniboin and Cree, armed with Hudson's Bay Company muskets began to move into the territory occupied by the Blackfoot, Gros Ventre and Chipewyan in order to secure new trapping territory and to consolidate their position as middlemen in the European trade.



Cree Camp

**Source:** Courtesy of National Archives of Canada, C5181.

Not all Aboriginal groups could be persuaded to return to the French alliance. Beginning in 1712 French troops fought a series of wars against the Fox which did not end until 1734. These wars led to a number of other clashes with some of the Aboriginal groups between the lower Great Lakes and the Mississippi. The Miami and

the Detroit Huron also clashed with the French and as a result moved south into the Ohio area. Some of the Ojibwa were attacked by the Dakota and moved into the area between Lake Superior and Rainy Lake, eventually reaching Lake Winnipeg and the bison-rich plains. This precipitated the movement of the Ojibwa to the northwest. However, the old animosities between the Dakota and the Assiniboin-Cree-Ojibwa did not end until the 19th century.

### Aboriginal Distributions 1740

By 1740 a number of trends had become clearly established that affected the lives of Aboriginal peoples. Both European powers tried to extend control over the interior of North America through Aboriginal alliances. Instead of using English troops, the Atlantic colonies worked through an alliance system, dominated by the Iroquois in order to harass or cajole Aboriginal groups into leaving the French area along the southern Great Lakes frontier.



A reproduction painting of a C.W. Jeffery's work on the cover of a 1915 Hudson's Bay Company Calendar, depicting the chartering of the HBC in 1670 in London, England as the "Company of Merchant Adventurers Trading into Hudson's Bay".

**Source:** Courtesy of C.W. Jefferys, Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

Although the Hudson's Bay Company did not encourage warfare, their Aboriginal trading partners used muskets to good advantage to extend the influence of the Company far into the western interior of Canada. Threatened by English-sponsored pressure from the north and south, the French responded with garrisoned posts and direct intervention with troops in order to preserve their alliance system and trade.

Both European powers were well aware that their imperial ambitions could only be maintained with Aboriginal help. The ensuing wars, some due to pre-European animosities, others instigated or encouraged by the European powers, were the dominant cause of Aboriginal population movements.

In the Arctic, contact with the eastern and central Inuit was sporadic and judged to be unprofitable by the English. The Inuit generally avoided European contact and managed to maintain a traditional way of life. The locations of Inuktituk groups are based on limited European knowledge at this time and are based on later contemporary sources.

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## Map Sources

### **Distribution of Ethnohistorical Societies circa 1740**

The location of the ethnohistorical societies was determined primarily through eighteenth century written accounts and maps. Natural Resources Canada. 1988. Canada-Native Peoples 1740 [map]. Fifth Edition, National Atlas of Canada.

### **Extent of Areas Known to Europeans circa 1740**

The approximate extent of the areas known directly to Europeans or through reliable Aboriginal accounts circa 1740. Areas outside represent the extent of areas unknown to Europeans. Natural Resources Canada. 1988. Canada-Native Peoples 1740 [map]. Fifth Edition, National Atlas of Canada.

### **Major Linguistic Families circa 1740**

The major linguistic families are mapped using graduated circles to represent their estimated population circa 1740. Their location was determined primarily through eighteenth century written accounts and maps. Natural Resources Canada. 1988. Canada-Native Peoples 1740 [map]. Fifth Edition, National Atlas of Canada.

## References

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## **Related Web sites (1999 – 2009)**

### **Federal Government**

Canadian Heritage. Canadian Heritage Information Network. Artefacts Canada  
<http://www.pro.rcip-chin.gc.ca/artefact/index-eng.jsp>  
Previously known as the National Inventories, provides access to information on millions of museum objects, natural history specimens and archaeological sites. (Artefacts Canada)

Canadian Museum of Civilization. First Peoples. The Haida  
<http://www.civilization.ca/aborig/haida/haindex.html>  
The Haida: Children of the Eagle and the Raven by Dr. George F. MacDonald.

Canadian Museum of Civilization. First Peoples. The Inuvialuit of the Western Arctic: From Ancient Times to 1902  
<http://www.civilization.ca/aborig/inuvial/indexe.html>  
History of the Inuvialuit of the Western Arctic.

Canadian Museum of Civilization. Virtual Museum of New France  
<http://www.civilization.ca/aborig/inuvial/indexe.html>  
The Virtual Museum of New France (VMNF) sponsored by the Canadian Museum of Civilization has information of that period of history in which the French explored North America and founded there the colony of New France.

Canadian Museum of Civilization. Virtual Museum of New France. People. Coureurs-de-bois  
<http://www.civilisations.ca/vmnf/popul/coureurs/index-en.htm>  
Information on the people involved in the fur trade in New France. (Canadian Museum of Civilization)

Government of Canada. Canada's Digital Collections. Aboriginal Digital Collections  
<http://collections.ic.gc.ca/e/adc.asp>  
Gateway to web sites of Canadian Aboriginal images and information, created by Aboriginal youth with funding from Industry Canada.

Government of Canada. Canada's Digital Collections. The Acadian Odyssey: History of Acadia  
<http://collections.ic.gc.ca/acadian/intro/intro.htm>



## The history of Acadia and the Acadian Experience in Canada

### Government of Canada. Indian Land Claims Commission

<http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/al/ldc/ccl/index-eng.asp>

Includes information on treaties and other important Aboriginal documents.

### Library and Archives Canada. Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online

<http://www.biographi.ca/index.html>

### Lower Canada

<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/2/18/h18-2002-e.html>

Part of the Federal Government's History of Canada on the Internet. (Government of Canada)

## Provincial/Territorial Government

### Inuit

<http://www.heritage.nf.ca/aboriginal/inuit.html>

Information on the Inuit of Labrador. (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and Memorial University)

### Location Maps of Hudson Bay Company's Posts

[http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/hbca/resource/cart-rec/postmap/hbc\\_c.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/hbca/resource/cart-rec/postmap/hbc_c.html)

Interactive map of all Hudson's Bay Company Posts with related information for each post. (Manitoba Archives)

### Nova Scotia Museum. Archaeology in Nova Scotia

<http://museum.gov.ns.ca/arch/index.htm>

The Nova Scotia Museum's Archaeology in Nova Scotia web site.

### Post-Contact Beothuk History

[http://www.heritage.nf.ca/aboriginal/beo\\_hist.html](http://www.heritage.nf.ca/aboriginal/beo_hist.html)

History of the Beothuk post-European contact. (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and Memorial University)

### The Boyd's Cove Beothuk Site

[http://www.heritage.nf.ca/aboriginal/beo\\_boydscove.html](http://www.heritage.nf.ca/aboriginal/beo_boydscove.html)

Archaeological site in Newfoundland. (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and Memorial University)

### The Mi'kmaq (Micmac)

<http://www.heritage.nf.ca/aboriginal/mikmaq.html>

Information on the Micmac. (Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage)

## Municipal Government

### The Beaver



[http://www.gov.edmonton.ab.ca/comm\\_services/city\\_op\\_attractions/fort/1846/made\\_beaver\\_system.html](http://www.gov.edmonton.ab.ca/comm_services/city_op_attractions/fort/1846/made_beaver_system.html)

History of the beaver as a form of currency of the Fur trade. (City of Edmonton, Alberta)

## **Other**

1755 - The French and Indian War

<http://web.syr.edu/~laroux/index.html>

This site is dedicated to the French Soldiers who came to New France between 1755 and 1760 to fight in the French and Indian War. This conflict was fought, in the most part, in the Lake George, Lake Champlain region of New York, at Québec (City), and at Montréal.

Aboriginal Languages of Canada

<http://www.ethnologue.com/>

Information on Aboriginal Languages from ETHNOLOGUE: Languages of the World, Thirteenth Edition.

Aboriginal Links (Aboriginal Canada Network)

<http://www.aboriginalcanada.ca/native.html>

A History of the Northwest Coast

<http://www.hallman.org/indian/.www.html>

First person accounts from the European/Indian contact period on the NW Coast. (by Bruce Hallam)

Algonquin

<http://www.tolatsga.org/alg.html>

History of the Algonquin. (Compact Histories of Native Tribes of the U.S. and Canada)

An Introduction of Ojibwa Culture and History

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Acropolis/5579/ojibwa.html>

Written by Kevin Callahan. (University of Minnesota)

Canadian Heritage Gallery

<http://www.canadianheritage.com/index2.htm>

The Canadian Heritage Gallery is a very extensive collection of historical Canadiana on the Internet.

Compact Histories of Native Tribes of the US and Canada

<http://www.dickshovel.com/up.html>

When completed these "histories" will encompass approximately 240 tribal histories (from contact to 1900). They include histories of many Canadian Aboriginal Peoples.

Dakota

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Acropolis/5579/dakota.html>

Information on Dakota culture and history. (University of Minnesota)

#### Fox

<http://www.tolatsga.org/sf.html>

History of the Fox. (Compact Histories of Native Tribes of the U.S. and Canada)

Gouvernement de la France. Ministère de la culture et de la communication. La Nouvelle France (available only in French)

<http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/nllefce/fr/>

The history of New France. The site is sponsored by the Government of France.

#### Gros Ventre

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Troy/6045/textpage1.html>

Short history of the Gros Ventre. (The Gros Ventre of Montana)

Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump Interpretive Centre. Blackfoot History

<http://www.head-smashed-in.com/black.html>

Brief history of the Blackfoot.

Historical Atlas of Canada Online Learning Project

<http://www.historicalatlas.ca/website/hacolp/>

This site is still under development but promises to be an excellent site for historical maps of Canada. All maps shown on the site have been adapted from the printed version of three-volume Historical Atlas of Canada.

#### Huron

<http://www.tolatsga.org/hur.html>

History of the Huron. (Compact Histories of Native Tribes of the U.S. and Canada)

#### Iroquois

<http://www.tolatsga.org/iro.html>

History of the Iroquois. (Compact Histories of Native Tribes of the U.S. and Canada)

Memorial University of Newfoundland. Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage.

Aboriginal Peoples. Beothuk

<http://www.heritage.nf.ca/aboriginal/beothuk.html>

History of the Beothuk (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and Memorial University)

#### Miami

<http://www.dickshovel.com/mia.html>

History of the Miami. (Compact Histories of Native Tribes of the U.S. and Canada)

#### Montagnais

<http://www.dickshovel.com/mon.html>

History of the Montagnais. (Compact Histories of Native Tribes of the U.S. and Canada)

Native Peoples of Minnesota: Dakota

<http://www.anthro.mankato.msus.edu/history/mncultures/dakota.html>

History of the Dakota. (Minnesota State University, Mankota)

### Ojibwa

<http://www.tolatsga.org/ojib.html>

History of the Ojibwa. (Compact Histories of Native Tribes of the U.S. and Canada)

### Oneida

<http://www.oneidaindiannation.com/BRHISTORY.HTML>

Brief history of the Oneida Indians. (Oneida Indian Nations)

### Ottawa

<http://www.tolatsga.org/otta.html>

History of the Ottawa. (Compact Histories of Native Tribes of the U.S. and Canada)

### Outline of American History: The Dutch in North America

[http://odur.let.rug.nl/~usa/H/1990/ch1\\_p7.htm](http://odur.let.rug.nl/~usa/H/1990/ch1_p7.htm)

A history of the Dutch in North America. (The American Revolution - an .HTML project)

### Pemmican

<http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/Atrium/4832/buffalo3.html>

Information on the trade of pemmican in the western interior. (The Métis Nation)

### Petun

<http://www.ukans.edu/kansas/wn/petun/bulletins.htm>

Information on the Petun from the Petun Research Institute (University of Kansas)

### Public Broadcasting Service. Lewis and Clark. Assiniboin

[http://www.pbs.org/lewisandclark/native/idx\\_ass.html](http://www.pbs.org/lewisandclark/native/idx_ass.html)

Brief history of the Assiniboin.

### Royal Ontario Museum. Homes of the Past. The Archaeology of an Iroquoian Longhouse

<http://www.rom.on.ca/programs/activities/longhouse/longhouse1.php>

Description of Iroquoian settlement in the Eastern Woodlands of Ontario. (Royal Ontario Museum)

### Salishan

<http://people.finearts.uvic.ca/~maltwood/nwcp/coastsal/intro.html>

Information on the Coast Salish Nation. (Maltwood Museum, University of Victoria)

### Six Nations of the Grand River Reserve

<http://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/~pjohnson/six.html>

Brief history of the Six Nations. (McMaster University)

### The Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions (CIHM)

<http://www.canadiana.org/marc/>

The Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions (CIHM) was established in 1978 to locate early printed Canadian materials (books, annuals, and periodicals), to preserve their content on microfilm, and make the resulting Early Canadian Research Collection available to libraries and archives in Canada and abroad.



### The Fur Trade - The Hudson's Bay Company and Northwest Company

<http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/Atrium/4832/hudson3.html>

Concise history of the two rival trading companies. (The Metis Nation)

### The Hudson's Bay Company Archives

<http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/hbca/index.html>

The HBCA offers a wealth of information on the human and natural history of western and northern Canada and the western USA. Whether you are an historian, genealogist, ethnologist, environmental scientist or land claims researcher, the HBCA may be able to help.

### The Iroquois Wars

<http://rfester.tripod.com/iroq.html>

Background information on the Iroquois Wars. (The Illini Confederation)

### The Provincial Museum of Newfoundland and Labrador. Publications. Museum Notes. The Beothuks

<http://www.nfmuseum.com/notes1.htm>

Further information on the Beothuk by Dr. Pastore. (Memorial University)

### University of Manitoba. Department of Anthropology. Manitoba Archaeological Society. Manitoba Culture History

<http://www.umanitoba.ca/anthropology/manarchnet/toc.html>

The archaeological history of Manitoba, sponsored by the Manitoba Archaeological Society.

### University of Manitoba. Department of Anthropology. Manitoba Archaeological Society. Manitoba Culture History. Terminal Woodland Period. Blackduck Phase

<http://www.umanitoba.ca/anthropology/manarchnet/chronology/woodland/blackduck.html>

History of the Blackduck Phase of the Terminal Woodland.

### University of Waterloo. Faculty of Arts. Department of Anthropology. Archaeology in Arctic North America

<http://anthropology.uwaterloo.ca/ArcticArchStuff/index.html>

Site includes information on Thule and Dorset Culture. (University of Waterloo, Ontario)

### University of Western Ontario. Faculty of Social Science. Association of Canadian Map Libraries and Archives (ACMLA)

<http://www.ssc.uwo.ca/assoc/acml/>

ACMLA actively serves as the representative professional group for Canadian map librarians, cartographic archivists and others interested in geographic information in all formats.

### University of Western Ontario. London Museum of Archaeology

<http://www.uwo.ca/museum/>

The London Museum of Archaeology is a unique Canadian museum devoted to the study, display, and interpretation of the human occupation of Southwestern Ontario over the past 11,000 years.



**Winnebago History**

<http://www.dickshovel.com/win.html>

History of the Winnebago. (Compact Histories of Native Tribes of the U.S. and Canada)

**Wyandot**

<http://history.cc.ukans.edu/kansas/wn/>

Information on the Wyandot nations of Kansas. (Wyandot Nation of Kansas)

