

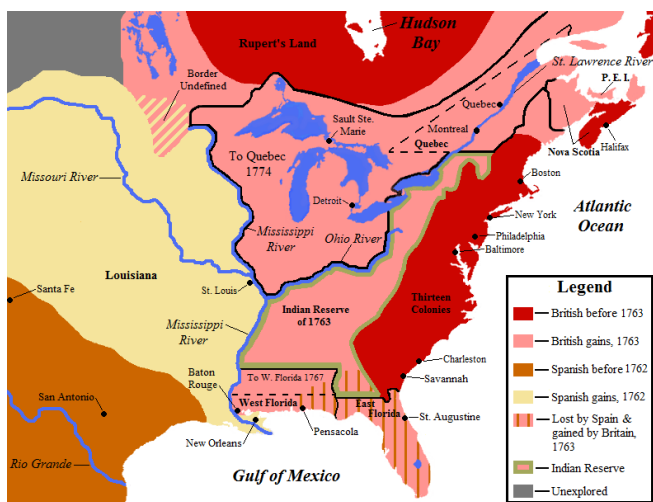
The Treaty of Paris

1763

The Treaty of Paris, signed February 10, 1763, ended the Seven Years War, known in North America as the French & Indian War. The treaty was signed by Great Britain and its ally Portugal and by France and its ally Spain, terminating what had been an eight-year world war fought on five continents and on the high seas. The Treaty of Paris was noteworthy for the vast exchange of territories it entailed, principally the cession of Canada to victorious Great Britain by France.

During the war, Great Britain had conquered French Canada, as well as numerous French holdings in the Caribbean, French trading posts in India and French holdings in West Africa, as well as Spanish colonies in the Philippines and Cuba. France had captured Minorca and British posts in Sumatra, while Spain had seized a border fort in neighboring Portugal. The Treaty restored most, but not all, of the seized territories to their original owners, including the sugar rich island of Guadeloupe to France.

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Britain came off the winner, however, with the transfer to Britain of Canada and the eastern half of French Louisiana (that is the extensive territory between the Mississippi River and the Appalachians). France thus lost all of its North American possessions except for Louisiana west of the Mississippi, which it had secretly transferred to Spain three months before the Treaty, but which Spain did not occupy until 1769, and the two fishing islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon off the coast of Newfoundland. In addition, Spain

ceded Florida to Great Britain. Under the terms of the Treaty French Canadians were granted unrestrained emigration for 18 months. Only 270 French Canadians took up the offer.

The most important consequences of the Treaty included 1) the solidification of Great Britain's position as the dominant European global world power; 2) the vast increase in land subject to British sovereignty and the bolstering, and complicating, of its geopolitical position; 3) the incorporation of the French Canadians into the British Empire, with a guarantee of their freedom to practice the Roman Catholic religion; and 4) the seeds of the American secession from the British Empire as Great Britain turned to its American colonies to help pay for expenses incurred during the conflict.