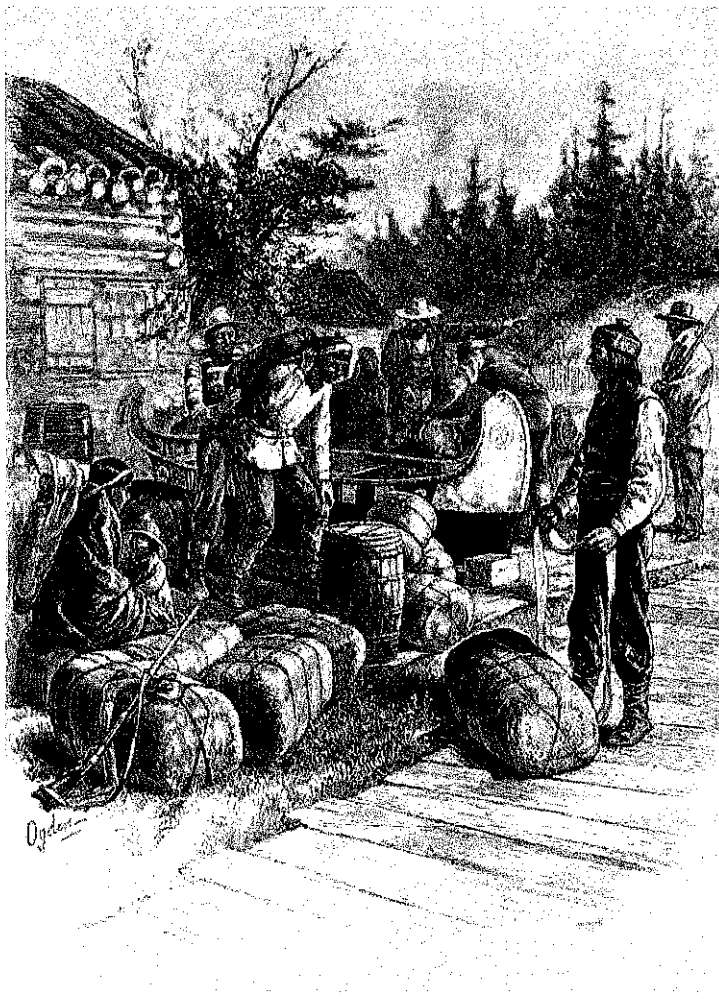


# How did early Canada evolve from the relationships among First Nations, Métis, and newcomers?

First Nations, Métis, and French newcomers were partners in the fur trade. First Nations and Métis peoples were excellent trappers and hunters. They could transport pelts over long distances by sled and canoe. French fur traders explored farther into the interior of early Canada, taking European trade goods with them. They encouraged First Nations and Métis to trade furs for items such as blankets, metal axes and hammers, and metal pots.

▼ This engraving from 1882 shows fur traders preparing for a journey from Lake Winnipeg to York Factory, on the shore of Hudson Bay.



The Métis had two main roles in the fur trade—as skilled trappers, and as a bridge between European newcomers and First Nations. First Nations allowed the French to establish trading posts and operate their trade within their territories. Traders, Métis, and First Nations all saw the benefits of the trade relationship.

## First Nations Influence on the French

French newcomers benefited greatly from their partnerships with First Nations peoples. They gained knowledge and technology that not only helped them survive, but allowed them to successfully take part in the fur trade.

### Technology

Coueurs de bois quickly adopted moccasins, snowshoes, and fur clothing. Like their First Nations trading partners, they travelled light and used canoes and dogsleds to travel long distances. First Nations women played an important role in the fur trade by providing the skills and knowledge to make and repair these items. They also cleaned and prepared furs.

### Medicines

First Nations peoples shared their knowledge of medicines and healing with the Europeans. Traditional medicines of the First Nations came from local plants, trees, and flowers.



◀ How might European goods have assisted or posed challenges to First Nations in the interior?

# Adopting New Technology

First Nations, Métis, and European newcomers quickly discovered that each group had technology that could benefit the other. For example, Europeans adopted the canoe for travel over lakes and rivers. First Nations welcomed items such as metal pots, which made daily life easier. They also adopted the gun, which was useful for hunting.

**FOCUS ON HISTORICAL EVIDENCE** What examples of one people influencing the other can you find in the images shown below? When comparing pieces of historical evidence, it helps to establish categories to compare. In this case, the categories might be clothing, weapons, footwear, and manufactured goods.



▲ This 1869 painting by Frances Anne Hopkins shows the artist and her husband, a Hudson's Bay Company official, travelling with voyagers. The illustration above it shows a hunter in New France. What European and First Nations technologies are these people using?

**THINKING CRITICALLY** In what ways did technology such as the gun and the canoe influence the development of early Canada?

## Forming Relationships: Allies and Enemies

When Europeans first arrived in North America, they needed help from First Nations peoples to survive. This relationship grew as the two groups became partners in the fur trade. As the fur trade developed in the west, the French also created relationships with First Nations in the prairies. The Dakota, for example, agreed to a treaty of peace, friendship, and trade with the Governor of New France in Montréal in 1695. Dakota Chief Tiyoskata is buried in Montréal.

Sadakanahatie was an Onondaga leader in what is now New York State. He helped to negotiate peace agreements between his people and the English representatives who came to control the area in the late 1600s. This English translation of a speech by Sadakanahatie shows him recalling how his people helped the Europeans.

### Voices of Canada

#### Welcoming New Friends

When Christians first arrived in this country, we received them kindly. When they were few in number, we entered into an alliance with them.... We were so fond of their society that we tied the great canoe that brought them with a strong iron chain fastened to a great mountain. As soon as the Europeans arrived, the general council at Onondaga planted this pine tree whose roots and branches have spread all over the land; under the shade of this tree all these European colonies have been frequently sheltered.

*Sadakanahatie, Onondaga leader, 1694*

### Journey to Montréal

Tiyoskata was in Montréal to negotiate the fur trade relationship between his people, the Dakota, and the Governor of New France.

#### LEARNING TIP

Sadakanahatie uses many images in his speech about First Nations' help for the French. Imagery can be used to help readers or listeners understand a message.

## Allies to Support the Fur Trade

Samuel de Champlain, who had been sent by the king of France to set up trading posts in the region, recognized that good relationships with the First Nations could be to his advantage. He spent much of



the summer of 1604 in Tadoussac, where he formed alliances with the Algonquin, Montagnais, and Maliseet Nations.

Champlain and his First Nations allies made a deal: the First Nations would trade only with the French,

▲ *Défaite des Yroquois au Lac de Champlain, 1609* is a coloured version of Champlain's own drawing of the battle with the Haudenosaunee. Why might Champlain choose to illustrate this moment?

and in return the French would support them against their traditional enemies, the Haudenosaunee. In 1609, Champlain and his soldiers joined the Algonquin in a raid against the Haudenosaunee.

## The Beaver Wars

Although Champlain's alliances had secured sources of fur for the French, conflict increased in the region. The Dutch and British had also entered the fur trade and were establishing colonies in what is now New York State. The Haudenosaunee and other First Nations competed with each other to secure hunting grounds and trade contacts. Beaver were being overhunted, and they became scarce. More fighting began over territories where beaver could still be found. Decades of fighting followed, and many people died. Some First Nations were forced out of their traditional territories. Others were almost completely destroyed.



▲ This 2001 illustration by Francis Back shows part of the negotiations for the Great Peace of Montréal.

## Time for Peace

In 1701, representatives of the Haudenosaunee travelled to Montréal. They and more than 30 other First Nations who lived throughout the Great Lakes region agreed to peace. This treaty would be known as the Great Peace of Montréal. As a result of this treaty, the French and First Nations gained peaceful times in which to continue the fur trade.

## Thinking It Through

### Key Ideas

1. Identify one way in which (a) the First Nations influenced the early French newcomers and (b) the French influenced the First Nations. For each, write a sentence explaining the influence. **YC**

2. Explain why there were a number of wars between the French and the Haudenosaunee.

### Thinking Critically

3. How might Canada be a different place if Europeans and Indigenous Peoples had not formed alliances?