**Colonial Wars**

**A Progression of Wars**

As various European imperial powers settled on the new continent of North America, their conflicts became transatlantic. The British and the Dutch vied over the colony of New Netherland, the British and the Spanish fought the War of Jenkins’ Ear, and the British and the French fought in a series of wars that concluded in 1763 with the French and Indian War.

**Wars with Spain and the Netherlands**

The Anglo-Dutch Wars (1652–1674) were a series of conflicts fought largely at sea over Britain’s power to restrict trade to the colonies. Their impact on the colonies was mostly limited to their shifting ownership of New Netherland.

The War of Jenkins’ Ear (1739–1748) began over Britain’s supplying slaves and goods to the Spanish colonies in North America. The Spanish became suspicious that British ships were overreaching and began boarding and seizing British ships. The war gained its colorful name from a Spanish threat against British captain Robert Jenkins, whose ear was severed when his ship was boarded; he was told to show his ear to Parliament and tell the king that the Spanish would do the same to him. Its conflicts included a siege of St. Augustine in Florida by Georgian colonists and a counter-invasion of Georgia by Spanish forces.

**Wars with France**

Beginning in 1689, the British colonies became involved in a series of major wars between Britain and France for control of North America. Britain and France fought 4 wars. The French settlers in New France were outnumbered nearly 15 to one by settlers in the 13 British colonies, so the French relied heavily on American Indian allies.

**King William’s War**

King William’s War (1689–1697), also known as the “Nine Years War” and the “War of the League of Augsburg,” was part in the larger Anglo-French conflict for colonial domination throughout the world.

The colony of New France (Canada) and the Indian Wabanaki Confederacy had stopped New England expansion into by raiding settlements in present-day Maine, whose border New France defined as the Kennebec River in southern Maine. To stop the New England colonists, the French and Indians executed raids against targets in Massachusetts Colony (including present-day Maine).

With his New England militia, Sir William Phips moved in 1690 to take the French strongholds at Port Royal and at Quebec. Having to reckon with Quebec’s formidable natural defenses, its superior number of soldiers, and the coming of winter, Phips sailed back to Boston with his hungry, smallpox-ridden, and demoralized force. His failure showed a growing recognition of the need to replicate European combat techniques and war policy in order to achieve military success.

The Iroquois Indians suffered heavily in King William’s War and were brought, along with other western American Indians, into the French trading network. The British colonists’ treatment of American Indian tribes led directly to the Wabanaki tribe’s involvement in the war. Expanding settlements fueled tensions and offered an opportunity to the French, who wanted to counter English influence in the region. New England’s lack of stability and authority, the Wabanakis’ existing grievances, and French encouragement led to Wabanaki attacks on settlements on the Northeast coast, a pattern that would be repeated until the withdrawal of the French in 1763.

**Queen Anne’s War**

Queen Anne’s War (1702–1713) was the second war for control of the continent and was the counterpart of the War of the Spanish Succession in Europe. The conflict also involved a number of American Indian tribes as well as Spain, which was allied with France.

In 1702, Carolina governor James Moore led an unsuccessful attack on St. Augustine, the capital of Spanish Florida, as well as one of several raiding expeditions that wiped out much of Florida’s American Indian population in 1704–1706.

French privateers inflicted serious losses on New England’s fishing and shipping industries. The privateering was finally curbed in 1710 when Britain provided military support to American colonists, resulting in the British Conquest of Acadia (which later became Nova Scotia).

The war ended in 1713, and by the Treaty of Utrecht, Britain gained Acadia, the island of Newfoundland, the Hudson Bay region, and the Caribbean island of St. Kitts. France was required to recognize British authority over the Iroquois.

Following Queen Anne’s War, relations between Carolina and the nearby American Indian populations deteriorated.

**King George’s War**

King George’s War, 1744–1748, was the North American phase of a war in Europe. In 1745, naval and ground forces from Massachusetts captured the strategic French port city of Louisbourg.

During the war, the French made four attempts to regain Acadia. The French led American Indian allies in numerous raids, such as the destruction of the village of Saratoga, New York, killing and capturing more than 100 of its inhabitants. The war merged into the War of Jenkins’ Ear against Spain and ended with a treaty under which the French regained Louisbourg.

**The French and Indian War**

The final imperial war, the French and Indian War (1754–1763), known as the Seven Years’ War in Europe, proved to be the decisive contest between Britain and France in America.

The war began over competing land claims between Britain and France in what is now western Pennsylvania. The war continued until 1763, when the French signed the Treaty of Paris and essentially forfeited the land of New France, ending their power on the continent.

The British Empire had now gained mastery over North America and become a truly global empire. This last of the wars for empire, however, also sowed the seeds of trouble.

The war led Great Britain deeply into debt, and in the 1760s and 1770s, efforts to deal with the debt through imperial reforms would have the unintended consequence of causing stress and strain that threatened to tear the Empire apart.

QUESTIONS

1. Which European nations were the main participants in wars fought in colonial America?

2. What was the issue that drew England into conflict with the Netherlands in North America?

3. What started the War of Jenkins’ Ear? How did it get its colorful name?

4. What advantage did English colonists have against the French in the wars between these countries?

5. What started Jing Williams’ War?

6. Where was King Williams’ War fought?

7. What Indian involvement was there in this war?

8. How did this war further solidify the relationship between the French and the Indians?

9. What did the British win in Queen Anne’s War?

10. What impact did the war have on the Iroquois Indians?

11. What impact did this war have over the Indians in the Southern colonies?

12. What did the British capture in King George’s war?

13. What did the French try to recapture?

14. What happened at the end of this war?

15. How did the French and Indian War begin?

16. What happened to French claims in the New World after this war?

17. What was the financial impact of this war on England?