**King George's War (1744-1748)**

This war, known by the above name in America, was a part of a war that swept over Europe at this time under the name of the War of the Austrian Succession.

On the death of Charles VI, emperor of Austria, in 1740, the male line of the House of Hapsburg became extinct, and his eldest daughter, Maria Theresa, ascended the Austrian throne. But there were others who claimed the throne and the matter brought on a war of tremendous dimensions, embroiling nearly all the nations of Europe.

Again we find France and England on opposite sides, war being declared between them in the spring of 1744. Of this great war we have little to record here, as little of it occurred in America. Aside from the usual Indian massacres, but one great event marks King George's War -- the capture of Louisburg.

Louisburg, as we have noticed, was built on a point of land on Cape Breton Island; it commanded the chief entrance to the greatest of American rivers, except only the Mississippi.

It was a powerful fortress; it had cost six million dollars, and was twenty years in building. Its walls of solid masonry which were from twenty to thirty feet high, and their circumference was two and a half miles. The fort was the pride of the French heart in America. If had a hundred cannon It was looked upon as an impregnable fortress, that would keep out every intruder and baffle every foe; yet it was reduced and captured by a fleet of little fighting strength, bearing a few thousand soldiers, chiefly [New England](http://www.newenglandhistory.info/) farmers and fishermen.

The expedition to capture Louisburg was designed by the governor of Massachusetts, and led by William Pepperell of [Maine](http://www.mainehistory.info/). The fleet was composed of something over a hundred vessels, and just before sailing these were joined by four English ships from the West Indies, commanded by Commodore Warren. On the first day of May, 1745, a landing was soon made, and the siege continued for six weeks.

A French war vessel of sixty-four guns, laden with military stores, came to the rescue of the fort; but she was captured by the English fleet in open view of the helpless fort. This was the final stroke. The garrison could hold out no longer. On the 17th of June the fort and batteries were surrendered, and the British flag soon waved over the walls of Louisburg.

The French king was astonished at the fall of his great fortress in America, and determined to recapture it. He sent a fleet for the purpose, but the fleet commander died, and his successor committed suicide,. The next year the king sent another fleet, but it was captured by the English; and then came a Treaty to end the war.

The peace restored to each power what it had possessed before the war --- and that meant that Louisburg must be restored to the French. A wave of indignation swept over the English colonies when they learned that the fruit of their great victory had been quietly handed back, without their knowledge or consent, to the enemy from whom it had been taken.

Here we find one of the many remote causes that led the colonists in later years to determine that American affairs must be managed in America and not by a bunch of diplomats three thousand miles across the sea, who had little interest in the welfare and future of the colonies in the New World.