

The French and Indian War (Intro)

England and France fought a long series of wars between 1689 and 1815. The first few of these wars had little effect on North Carolina, but in 1754, war broke out between British colonists and French troops in America. That conflict spiraled into what some historians call the first true “world war,” fought on three continents. Called the Seven Years War in Europe, it is known as the French and Indian War in America, where the French and their American Indian allies fought the English, colonists, and their Indian allies. North Carolina contributed men to colonial armies and saw fighting in the Piedmont between colonists and the Cherokee. Britain and its allies eventually won, and in 1763, the Treaty of Paris gave Britain much of the North American territory formerly claimed by France.

The French and Indian War is important in the history of North Carolina and the United States mainly because of what happened afterward. Britain won the war, but the victory led to conflict with its colonies. Britain reserved much of its new territory for American Indians, angering colonists who thought they were fighting for new land. The British government was left with heavy debts and tried to pay them off by raising taxes on the colonists — who resisted. Just a dozen years later, these conflicts would lead to the American Revolution.

In this chapter, we’ll learn about the French and Indian War around the world and in North Carolina. We’ll also take a look at the first effort made to unite the British colonies of North America — an effort that failed, but would lay the groundwork for later efforts during the Revolution.

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Soldiers drill at Fort Dobbs in a French and Indian War reenactment.

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