

QUEBEC'S

Independence Movement

Quebec

- Quebec is located in eastern Canada.
- It is the largest of Canada's provinces and has the second-largest population.
- A large part of Canadian industry is centered in Quebec.
 - Many electronics and computer factories are based here.



Quebec

Montreal, Quebec



Quebec

- French is the official language of business and government in Quebec, and it is spoken by 90% of the people who live there.
- For over fifty years, many of Quebec's citizens have argued that their province should separate from Canada and become its own independent country.
- Why?...

New France

- In 1608, the French established their first permanent settlement in the New World in New France (now Quebec).
- Many French settlers moved there and participated in the highly profitable fur trade.
- Great Britain wanted a share of Canada's valuable natural resources, so they fought the French and Indian War in 1763.



Samuel de Champlain built the first permanent French settlement in the New World (called Quebec).

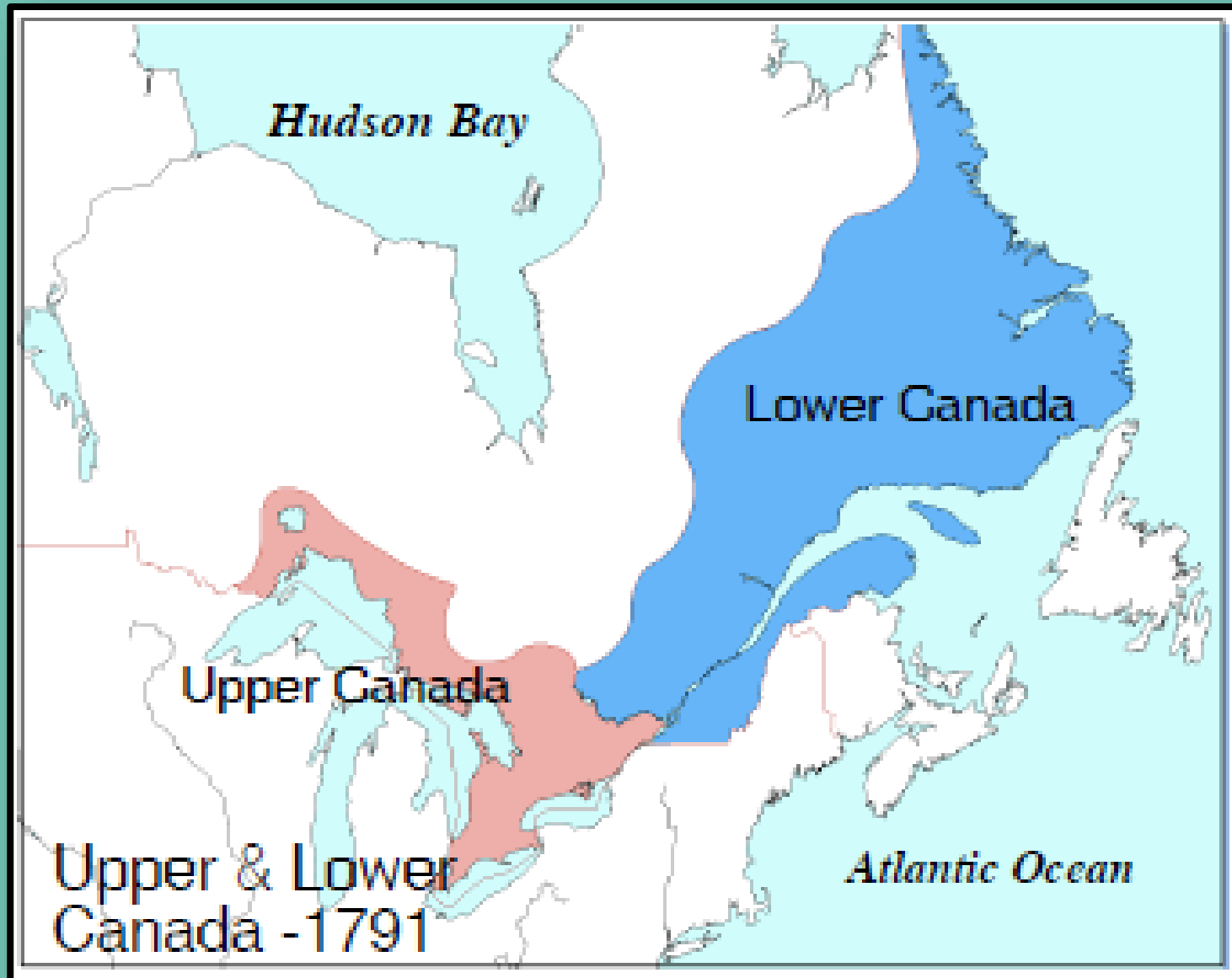


Hats made of beaver fur were in high demand in Europe.



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- The British won the war and divided Canada into Upper Canada (British) and Lower Canada (French) in 1791.
- The two colonizing countries still have an impact on Canadian culture in language and religion today.
 - Protestants came from England and Catholics came from France.
- They also influenced the traditions, foods, architecture, etc. that is prominent in Canada today.



Change

- In 1837, colonists grew unhappy with the British government and began to rebel.
- Great Britain did not want to repeat what happened with the American Revolution.
- Great Britain set up a government where the Canadian colonists governed themselves, except in matters of foreign trade, treaties, and defense.

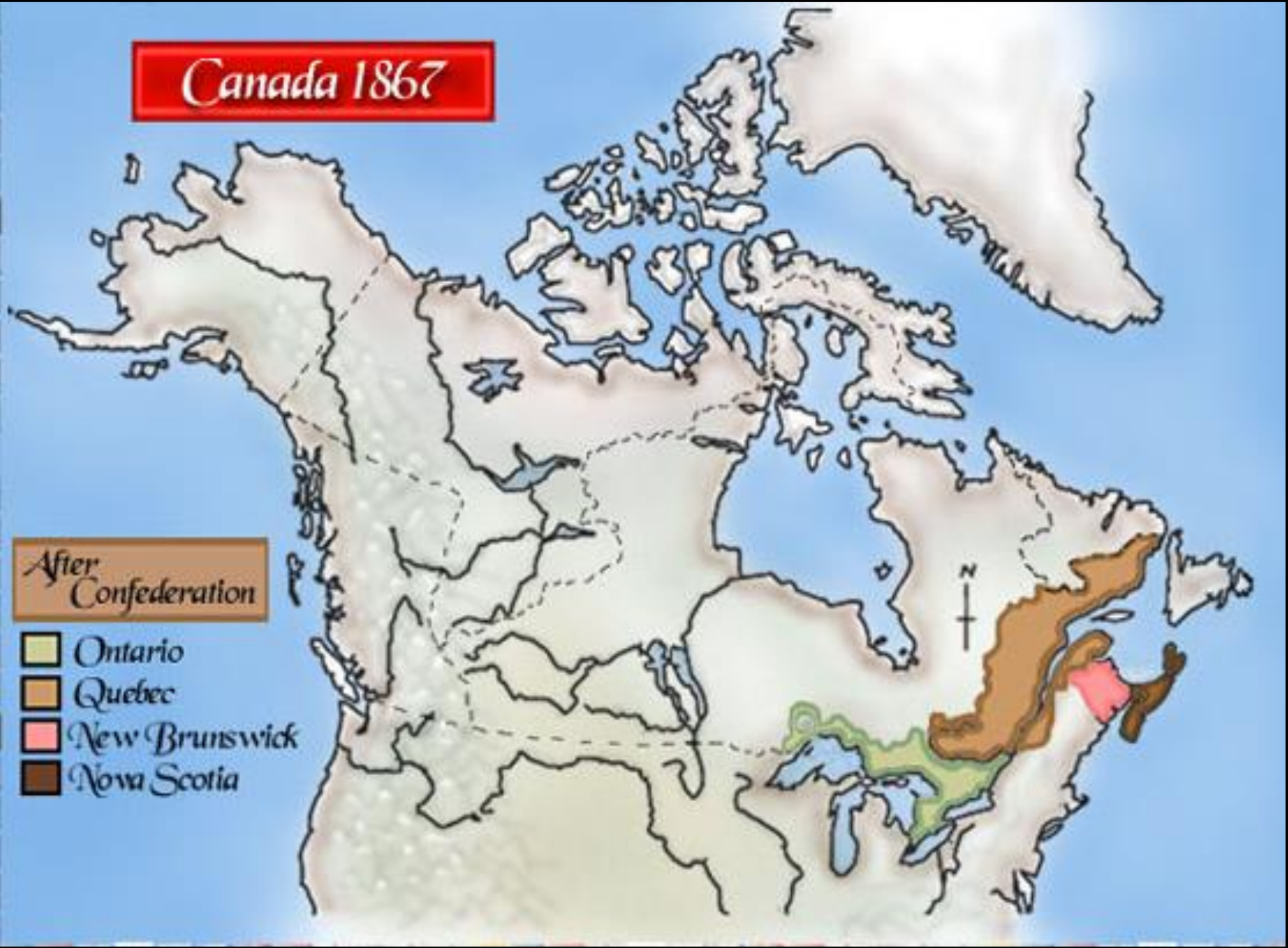
New Country

- In 1867, the British North America Act created the Dominion of Canada.
- This meant that Canada was an independent, self-governing nation, but still part of the British empire.
- The new country had four provinces: Quebec, Ontario, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia.

Canada 1867

After Confederation

- Ontario
- Quebec
- New Brunswick
- Nova Scotia

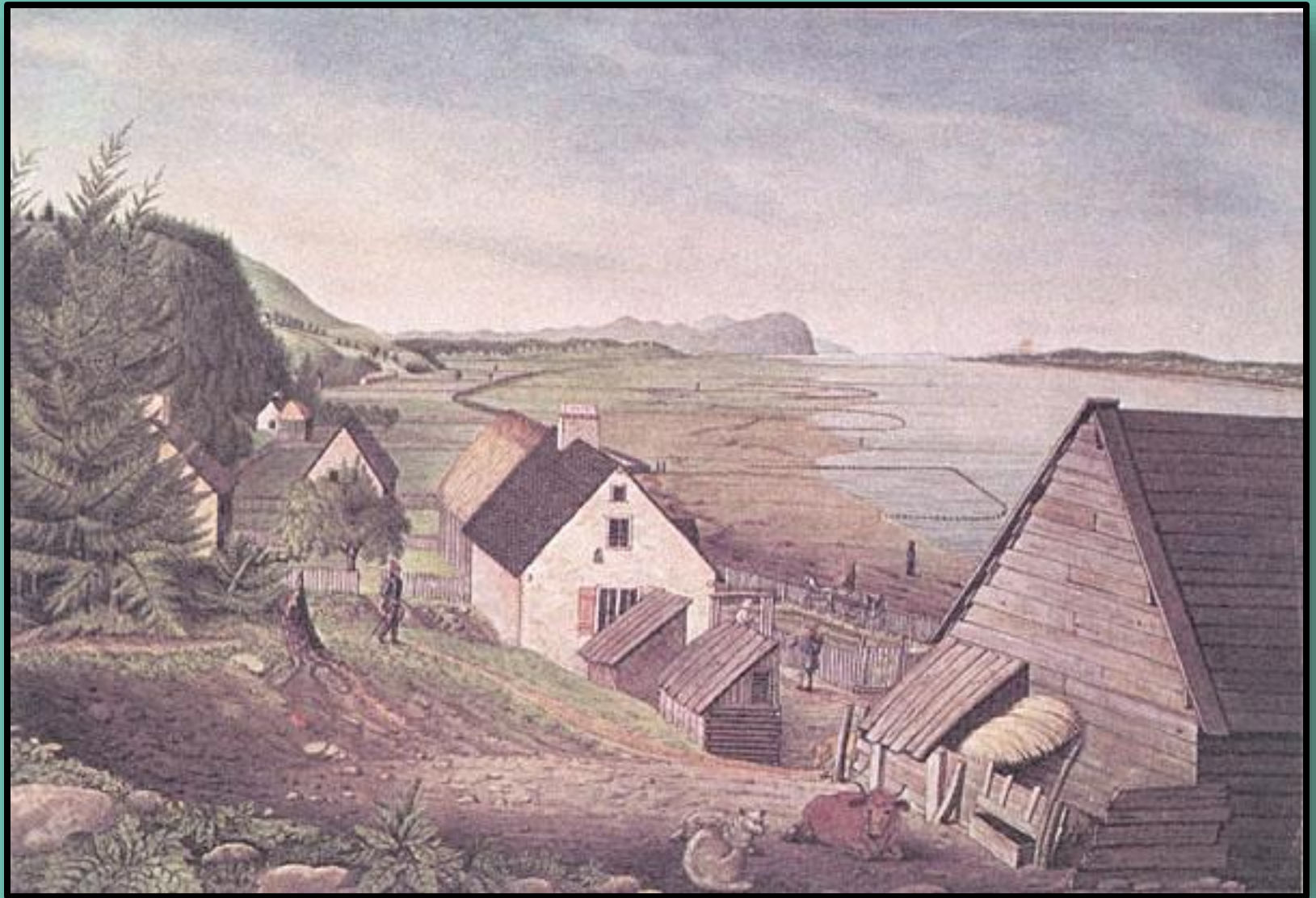


Influence

- More and more people moved from France to Quebec over the years.
- French became the official language of the province and is spoken by 90% of the population.
- Although Canada was united in 1867, the province of Quebec is still an island of French language and culture within the country.

Francophones

- Most French Canadian families had been living in Quebec for hundreds of years.
- French-speaking Quebecers (called Francophones) had a different culture than English-speaking Canadians (Anglophones).
- The majority lived on farms and rarely left their villages.
- Most French Canadians were Catholic, while the majority of British Canadians were Protestant.



Changes

- By the mid-twentieth century, Quebec had changed in many ways.
- Growing populations pushed into farmlands and rural people grew poor.
 - Many had to leave their farms and move to cities.
- Their lives were very different now.
 - They stopped going to Catholic churches.
 - They no longer led a traditional lifestyle.
 - English was spoken in most cities, while French was not.

Quebec City – 1960s



Not Fair

- Many French Canadians felt that their language and culture might disappear.
- French culture was overwhelmed by English.
- They were tired of feeling like second-class citizens in their own country.

Independence

- By the 1960s, the francophones were ready to launch an independence movement.
- Many French Canadians had become Quebec nationalists and thought of themselves as Quebecois, not Canadians.

Secede

- Many Francophones started to think that Quebec should secede from Canada.
- Separatists want Quebec to “separate” from Canada’s central government and become an independent nation.
- They want to preserve their cultural, religious, and ethnic identity and not be absorbed into Canadian society.

Separatists Protesting



Why Separate?

- Those who support Quebec separatism want:
 - to protect French language and culture
 - to be treated as equals with English-speaking Canadians
 - other Canadians to respect French language and culture
 - to preserve French Canadian culture for future generations

Against It

- Those who oppose Quebec separatism argue that separatism would:
- ruin national unity and pride
- result in economic disaster for Quebec
- make the rest of Canada lose all of Quebec's natural resources, high-tech industries, and control of the St. Lawrence River shipping route

Vote

- Most English Canadians felt most French Canadians had always had equal rights and enough representation in the government.
- The national government also argued against secession.
- In 1980 and 1995, the people of Quebec voted whether or not to secede.
 - Both votes were **in favor of staying Canadian.**
 - Last vote was very close: 49.4% voted to secede and 50.6% voted to stay Canadian.
- In both referendums, Quebec citizens voted to remain part of Canada.



Today

- In 1982, the Constitution Act made Canada bilingual (two official languages are French and English).
- In 1988, Canada's government passed a law giving all Canadians the right to preserve their cultural heritage.
- In 1998, Canada's Supreme Court ruled that Quebec could not secede without consent from all of the other provinces.
- Today, the separatist movement has become weaker and more divided, making the goal even harder to achieve.