

## The Boundaries of Canada, 1670-2001

For Canadians in the 21st Century, their country has always had the outline of this map, as if to say that the extent of Canada was predetermined and simply grew to fit limits set by three bounding oceans. The story of organizing the internal divisions is far more complicated and uncertain, however, reflecting competing claims by a variety of interested authorities over many generations.

To start this Maptour, navigate to the chapter page for:

### Territorial Evolution, 1670-2001

*Browse > National Perspectives - Boundaries > Territorial Evolution, 1670-2001*

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the 'Historical Atlas of Canada Online Learning Project'. The page title is 'Territorial Evolution, 1670-2001'. The main content area features a map of Canada with a timeline from 1600 AD to 2000 AD. The map highlights 'Boundary Changes' and 'Newfoundland Joins Confederation'. To the right of the map, there is an 'Overview' section with text explaining the predetermined outline of Canada. Below the overview, there are sections for 'Interactive Maps' (including 'Boundary Changes, 1670-2001' and 'Newfoundland Joins Confederation, 1949'), 'Static Maps' (including 'Proposals for the Prairie Provinces, 1905'), 'Graphs' (including 'Regional Share of Canadian Territory by Province, 1891, 1949' and 'Final Results of the Newfoundland Referendum, 1948'), and 'Slideshows' (including 'Territorial Timeline, 1670-2001'). The page also includes 'Notes' and 'More Resources' sections.

## Contending for Space



Try This:

- Open the interactive map "Boundary Changes, 1670-2001"



Notice ...

- The Hudson Bay drainage basin defines Canadian political geography in 1670.
- In 1670, England and France were major colonial claimants in North America.



Try This:

- Under LAYER CONTROLS, turn on the checkbox for "Modern Reference Geography".
- On the map, territory is coloured by the nation making claims. Click on the "Legend Info" button above the Legend to pop up a window showing detailed legend information. Scroll down to the section on "National affiliation" to find the colours which appear on the map.



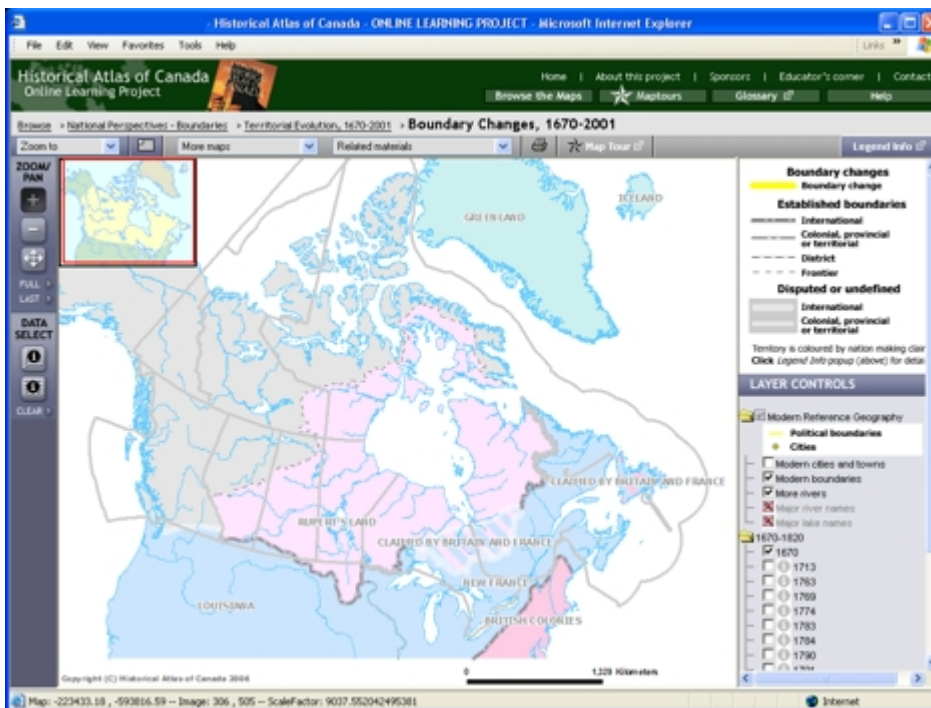
Notice ...

- Denmark claimed territory in America (Greenland) comparable in size to Canada's three prairie provinces.



Consider!

- Canada's history of internal land claims and international territorial tensions has been in progress for centuries.



Treaty of Utrecht



Try This:

- **Keep open** the interactive map Boundary Changes, 1670-2001. You may also **keep open** the "Legend Info" window showing "National Affiliation." You may want to reduce its size and drag it aside so it does not obscure the map, or "Minimize" it until you need it.
- Under LAYER CONTROLS, **turn on** the checkbox for the year "1713", and **turn off** "Modern Reference Geography."



Notice ...

- The yellow lines highlight boundaries established or altered in 1713.
- A major international agreement between colonial powers has established British control in some contentious areas, and created new conflict with France in others.



Try This:

- On the DATA SELECT toolbar, click on the Identify tool and then click on one of the highlighted lines on the map to pop up its information.



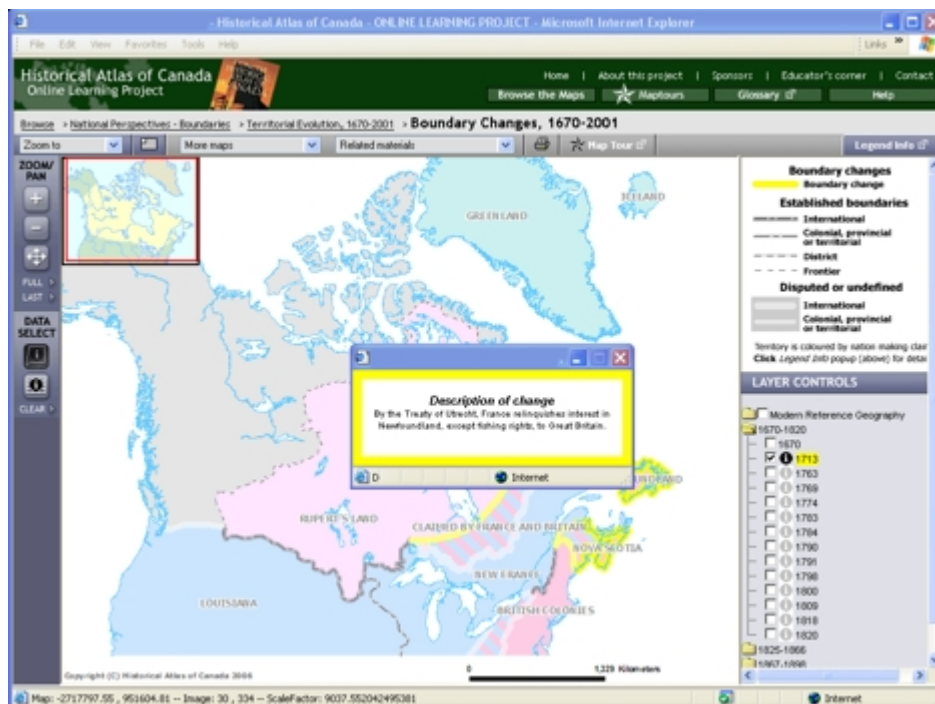
Notice ...

- The Identify box contains a description of the boundary change. (You can drag it aside if the map is obscured.)



Consider!

- Resolving disputes between Britain and France call for the diplomacy of a neutral power, in this case the Netherlands, so the treaty was signed in the Dutch city of Utrecht.
- The stage is being set for the deportation of the Acadians. At another time, see the chapter "Acadian Deportation and Return, 1750-1803."



## America's Revolutionary New Nation



Try This:

- Keep open the interactive map "Boundary Changes, 1670-2001."
- Under LAYER CONTROLS, turn on the checkbox for "1774"; then turn on "1783."
- Click back and forth, noting the substantial changes that occur on the map.



Notice ...

- The Canada - United States border through the Great Lakes appears for the first time.



Consider!

- In 1783 the United States, a sovereign nation, was poised to indulge its own territorial - some would say imperial - ambitions both west and north.



The 49th Parallel



Try This:

- Click on the "Related Materials" drop-down menu and select *Slideshow - Territorial Timeline, 1670-2001*.
- On the navigation bar at the top of the slideshow window, click on "1840-1849."



Notice ...

- A text narrates the circumstances of boundary changes.
- The international boundary was open to dispute on several fronts.



Try This:

- Under "Territorial Timeline, 1840-1849", read the text for "1842 Maine boundary dispute resolved."
- On the 1849 map, click on the red box for "Dispute A."



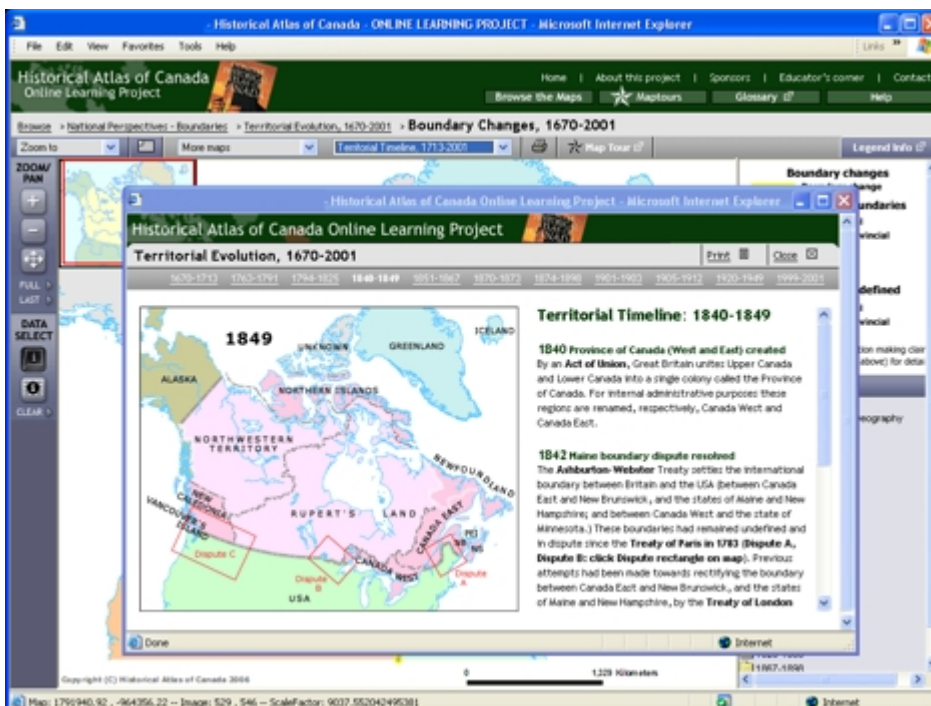
Notice ...

- Britain and the United States each laid claim deep into territory the other believed was rightfully theirs.



Consider!

- American imperial ambitions are bound up in the term "Manifest Destiny"- the idea that the United States was destined, inevitably, to be sovereign over all of North America.
- Britain had imperial ambitions too.



Constituting Canada



Try This:

- Close the Slideshow window, to return to the interactive map "Boundary Changes, 1670-2001."
- Under LAYER CONTROLS, close the folder for "1670-1820", and open the folder for "1867-1898". Turn on the checkbox for "1867."



Notice ...

- Ontario and Quebec were far smaller in 1867 than they are in the 21st century.



Try This:

- On the ZOOM/PAN toolbar, click on the Zoom in button and use it on the map to zoom in to the Ontario-Québec area.
- On the DATA SELECT toolbar, click on the Table tool and then drag a rectangle around the Ontario-Québec-Rupert's Land boundaries on the map to select them and pop up their data table.



Notice ...

- The table entries explain the constitutional, boundary and name changes occurring in 1867.



Consider!

- One way for the British to resist Manifest Destiny is to grant Canada status as a Dominion, uniting the most densely inhabited and most productive colonies of British North America.

The screenshot shows the 'Historical Atlas of Canada' website in Microsoft Internet Explorer. The main map displays the boundaries of Rupert's Land, Quebec, and the Maritime provinces in 1867. A 'Query Selection Results' window is open, showing a table of boundary changes for 1867.

Boundary changes 1867			
Seq	Event	Year	Description
1	Québec and Ontario named	1867	The British North America Act renamed Canada East and West to Québec and Ontario.
2	Canada established as federal state	1867	The British North America Act united the provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Canada into a federal state, the Dominion of Canada.

Below the table is a link: [Zoom to these records](#)

Prairie Options



Try This:

- Click on the "Related Materials" drop-down menu and select *Static maps - "Proposals for the Prairie Provinces, 1905."*



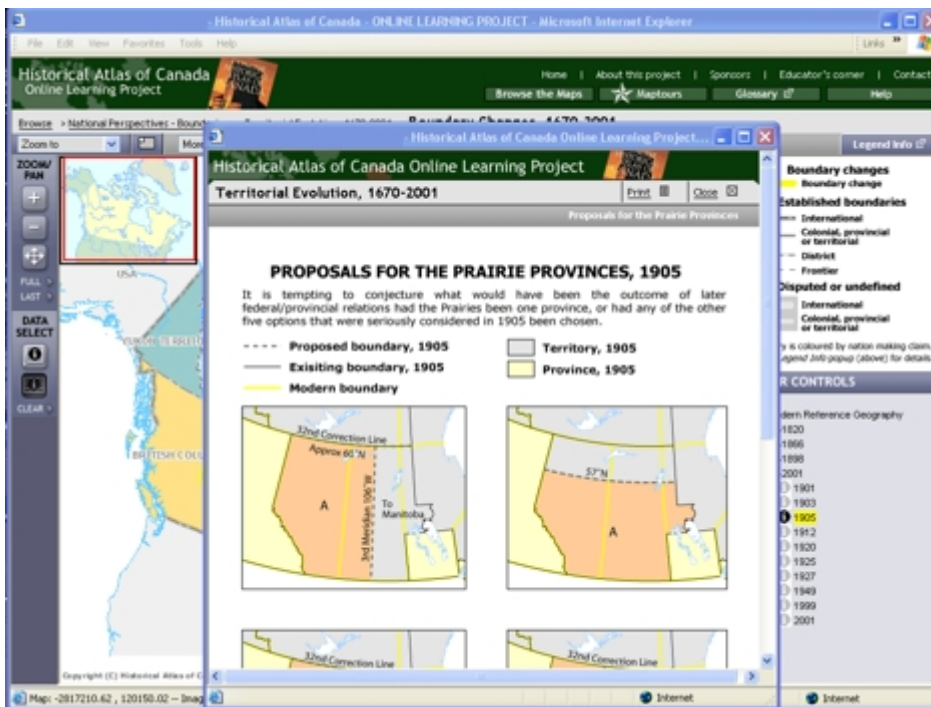
Notice ...

- Geometry prevails. All proposed boundaries in the prairies are based upon the global gridwork of lines of latitude and longitude.



Consider!

- Politicians charged with dividing up the prairies had no concept of (nor any apparent interest in) the physical geography of the region; they took the prairies to be a flat expanse of undifferentiated space.



Newfoundland Joins Confederation



Try This:

- Click on the "More maps" drop-down menu and open the interactive map "Newfoundland Joins Confederation, 1949."
- Under LAYER CONTROLS, close the folder for "JUNE 3, 1948" and open "JUNE 22, 1948."
- Turn off the checkbox for "Poll 2 Results" to see the underlying pattern of "Voter turnout". Click back and forth between the two views to compare them.



Notice ...

- The Newfoundland settled area is focused on the sea.
- Voters in the St. John's region were far less inclined to join Canada than were Newfoundlanders elsewhere.



Consider!

- Outport Newfoundlanders saw Confederation with Canada as an opportunity to trade impoverishment for financial security.



Try This:

- Click on the "Related materials" drop-down menu and select **Graphs - "Newfoundland Referendum Results."**
- Click on the file under "**Data Files (.xls)**" to see the numbers upon which these graphs are based.

These are just a few of the questions that these maps and data can address. If you have ideas for other questions, please use our Feedback page to send them in, and they may be posted on the website in the future.

