

**Nelson's Social Studies textbook.**  
**First Nations and European Explorers**  
**Pages 36- 45**

## Chapter 2

# Early Contact 1000 to Early 1600s

### Big Question

How did relationships among First Nations peoples and Europeans develop?

### Learning Goals

- describe the impact of contact among European explorers and First Nations peoples
- gather and organize information from primary and secondary sources
- identify some early European explorers and their reasons for exploration



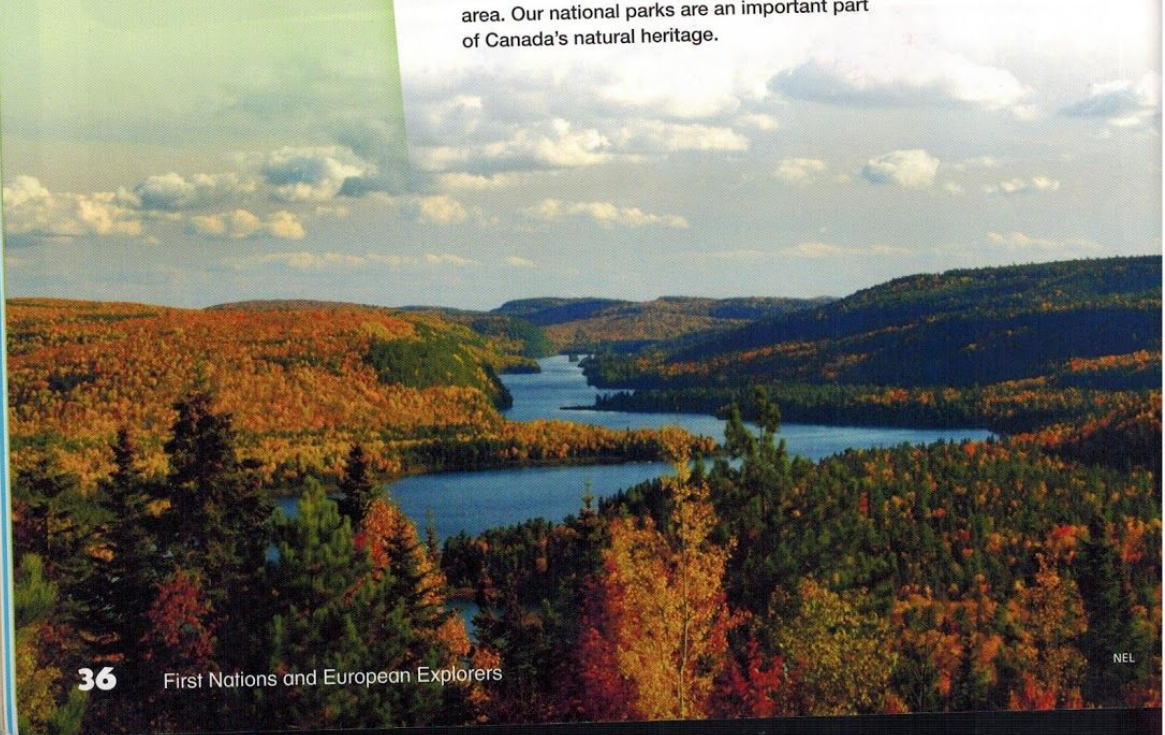
### Hi, I'm Samira.

I live in Montréal, Québec. Every year, I go camping with my Girl Guide group in a different national or provincial park.

Our guide leader always explains that we have the right to visit the park and use its resources, but we also have responsibilities. We have to take care of the land, clean up after ourselves, and respect others.

Some of the parks are so big that it feels like we must be the first people to ever set foot there! It makes me wonder about the first explorers who came to Canada. Why did they come? What happened when they met people who were already living here?

This photo shows La Mauricie National Park, in Mauricie, Québec. It is a protected natural area. Our national parks are an important part of Canada's natural heritage.





## Why Did European Explorers Sail to Canada?

Norse Vikings were probably the first Europeans to land in what is now Canada. They arrived around the year 1000, looking for fresh resources and places to live.

In the 1400s, other European explorers began sailing across the Atlantic Ocean. There were several reasons for these explorers to come to Canada. For a long time, Europeans had traded with India and China. However, the overland journey east through Europe and Asia was long and dangerous. European rulers wanted to find a water route to the west. In the search for this route, explorers came upon the lands that would eventually become Canada and other North American countries.

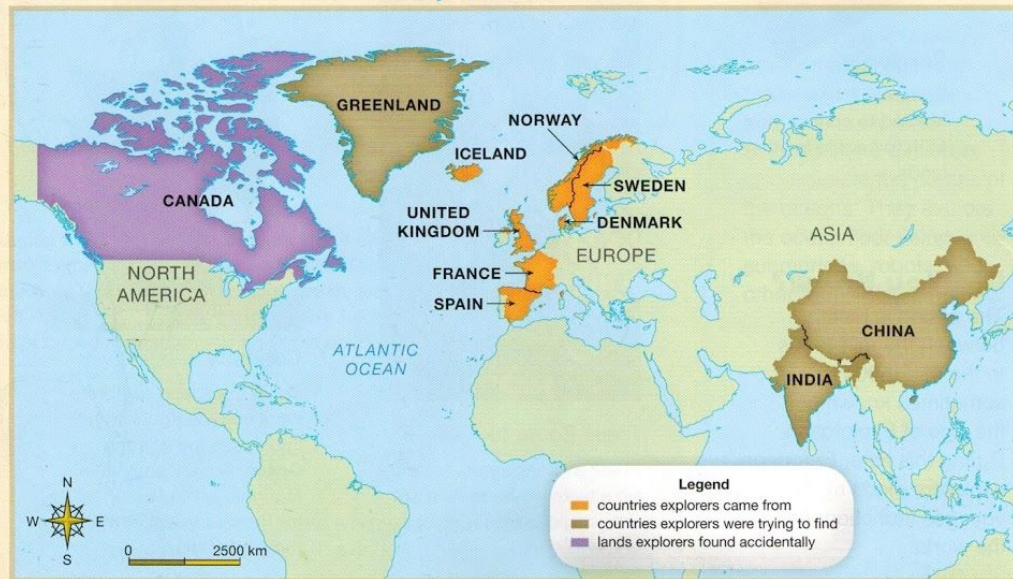
Another reason for exploring was that the rulers of most European countries, including France and England, were competing with one another for wealth and power. One way to gain wealth and power was to own and control more land. Rulers sent people on expeditions to explore and claim lands for their countries. Some of these lands became colonies.

### Expedition and Colony

An **expedition** is a journey that is organized for a specific purpose. A **colony** is an area claimed and controlled by a country in another part of the world. Often, the newcomers took over lands and displaced **Indigenous** peoples (original people of the land).

This modern map of the world can help you understand where explorers came from and where some European explorers went. Sweden, Norway, and Denmark are the modern countries where Vikings once lived. The United Kingdom includes England.

### Countries Focused on in this Chapter





## Reasons for Exploring



### Resources and Wealth

Many explorers wanted to obtain furs, fish, gold, silver, timber, and other resources.



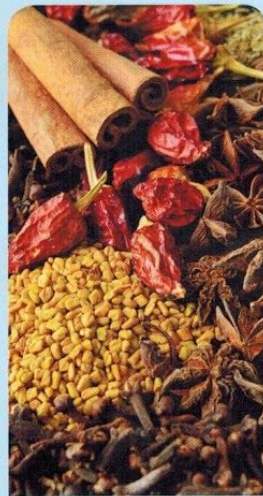
### Land and Power

Explorers claimed land on behalf of European rulers. Once the land was claimed, settlements and colonies were developed.



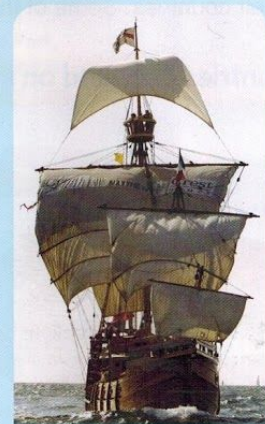
### Religion

European Christians wanted to spread their faith to people in other lands.



### Trade Route to Asia

Many explorers were looking for a water route to Asia so they could trade for spices, tea, and silks.



### Curiosity

Some European explorers were curious about what lay across the Atlantic Ocean. Advancements in technology made it possible for them to travel farther than ever before.

### Did You Know?

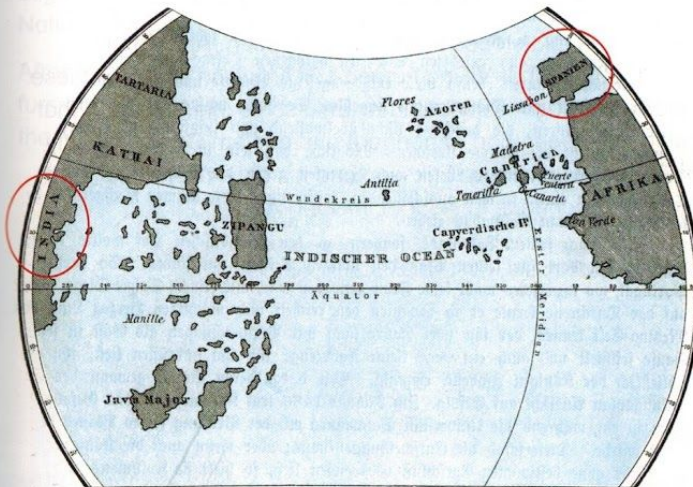
The period in history between the mid 1400s to the mid 1600s is sometimes known as the Age of Exploration. During this time, European explorers made many voyages that changed the world.



## Sailing Ships and Navigation

At this time, many parts of the world were unmapped. If there were maps, they were often incomplete or incorrect. People did not have the kinds of technology that we have today to travel and help them find their way. Sailors looked at the positions of the Sun and the stars to help them determine where they were. They used their knowledge of the sea to help them navigate through uncharted waters. For example, when sailors saw shorebirds, they knew that they were approaching land.

In the 1400s, Europeans designed ships that moved faster than ships had previously. They also adopted and used navigation tools from Asia, such as the compass and the astrolabe. These tools helped explorers find their way and travel farther than they had before.



During the 1400s, people thought that if they travelled west from Europe, they would arrive in Asia. This map shows their thinking. Spain is in the top right corner, and India is on the far left. This map has been reconstructed from a map created in 1474 by Italian mathematician Paolo dal Pozzo Toscanelli.

The astrolabe was an instrument that measured the position of the Sun and stars. It was used by astronomers to chart the sky. It could also be used to tell time. Sailors used a special version, the mariner's astrolabe, to locate their position at sea. Today, there are fewer than 100 mariner's astrolabes left in the world. Why do you think so few of these artifacts remain?



### Here and Now

People continue to explore. They explore other planets, such as Mars, using telescopes and robotic vehicles. Scientists and explorers also travel to the depths of the oceans. They explore the ocean floor using submarines, robots, and other forms of technology.

### Inquire and Apply

- 1 Would you want to be an explorer in this period of history? Why, or why not?
- 2 Construct a map to show what you have learned so far about early explorers. Add to the map as you continue learning throughout this chapter.



## Spotlight on the Norse

### Monitoring Comprehension

To help you follow the events of a complicated passage, look for words and phrases that show sequence. For example, the phrases, "around the year 985," "after many days," and "around the year 1000," provide clues to help you follow the order of events.

Today, we call the Newfoundland site where the Vikings built a settlement L'Anse aux Meadows.

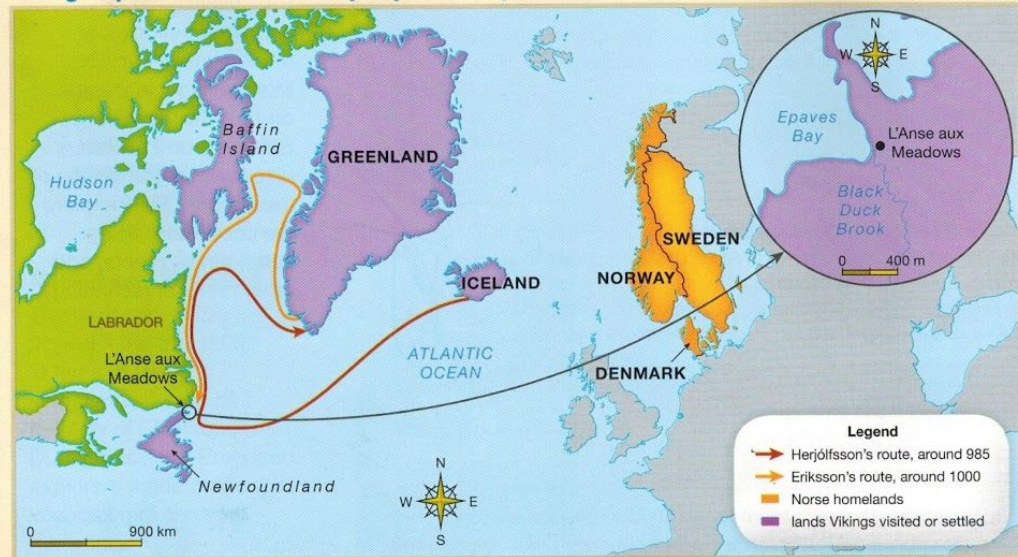
## Who Were the Norse?

Over 1000 years ago, some of the Norse left their homelands and sailed west across the Atlantic Ocean. Along the way, they established settlements in different places, including Iceland, Greenland, and Canada. Norse explorers were sometimes called Vikings.

**Sagas** are long stories that tell about heroes, especially those of the Norse. Some Norse sagas tell of a sailor named Bjarni Herjólfsson. While sailing from Iceland to Greenland around the year 985, his ship was blown off course. After many days of sailing through fog, he sailed past what was probably the coast of Labrador and headed back to Greenland.

Herjólfsson told stories of what he had seen. Around the year 1000, another Viking named Leif Eriksson set off to these lands. One saga describes how Eriksson explored a land that could have been part of northern and eastern Canada. Many historians believe that Eriksson and his crew may have been the first Europeans to set foot in North America.

### Viking Exploration Routes (proposed by historians)





## What Is L'Anse aux Meadows?

L'Anse aux Meadows was one of the very first European settlements in North America. Archaeologists think that this settlement was a place where the Norse stayed to repair their boats and prepare for their journeys back to Greenland.

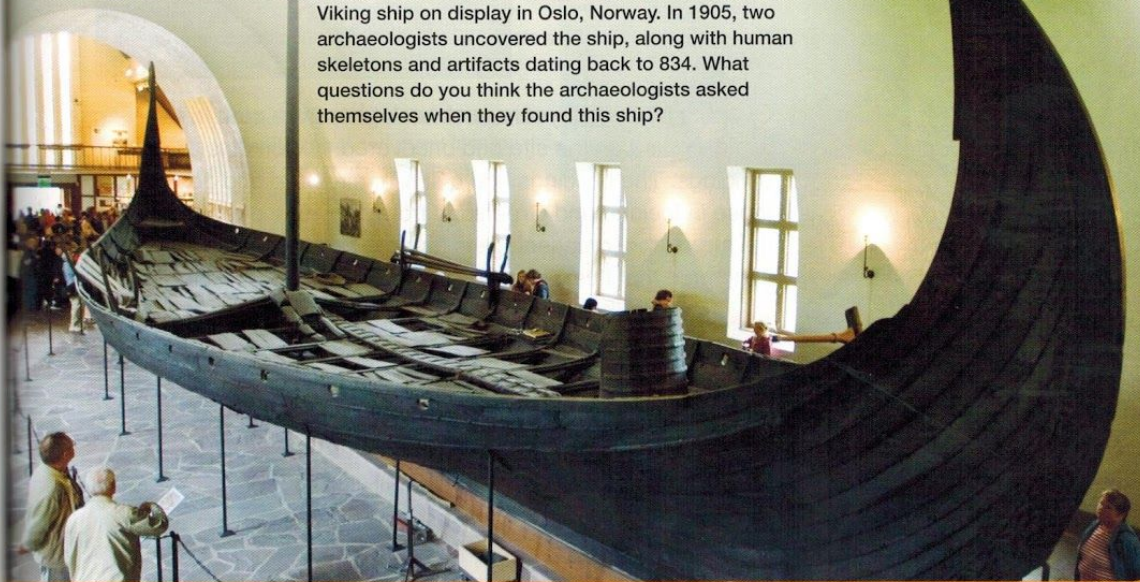
First Nations peoples had lived at the site of L'Anse aux Meadows long before the Norse arrived. Indigenous artifacts found there date back about 6000 years. Norse sagas tell that the Vikings traded with First Nations peoples, probably the Beothuk, Innu, and Mi'kmaq. First Nations peoples would have provided the Vikings with furs in exchange for iron goods. The sagas also tell that encounters between the Norse and First Nations peoples often ended in conflict.

After some years, the Norse loaded their ships with wood and furs and returned to Greenland. No one knows for certain why the Norse left.

### Did You Know?

Recent findings suggest that L'Anse aux Meadows may not be the only place in Canada that the Vikings visited. In 2012, archaeologist Pat Sutherland found evidence of a possible Viking outpost on Baffin Island.

When the Vikings arrived on Canada's coast, they saw abundant forests. Since the Viking ships were made of wood, this land provided them with a much-needed supply of lumber. This photo shows a reconstructed Viking ship on display in Oslo, Norway. In 1905, two archaeologists uncovered the ship, along with human skeletons and artifacts dating back to 834. What questions do you think the archaeologists asked themselves when they found this ship?





## How Was L'Anse aux Meadows Uncovered?

These are a few of the artifacts found at L'Anse aux Meadows. The discovery of a bone needle and a soapstone spindle whorl (a tool used for spinning fibres into thread) has led archaeologists to believe that Norse women lived in this settlement. How do you think historians determined that these were Norse artifacts?



bronze cloak pin



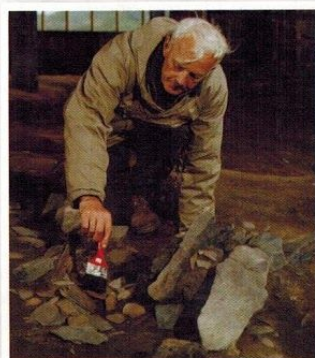
part of a bone needle



spindle whorl

For hundreds of years, the settlement at L'Anse aux Meadows lay in ruins. The ruins became overgrown.

Husband-and-wife team Helge Ingstad and Anne Stine Ingstad travelled from Norway to the island of Newfoundland in 1960. Helge Ingstad, an explorer, had studied the Vikings and read their sagas. He wanted to look for evidence of a settlement. A local resident told him of some strange mounds and ridges in the ground to the north. After Helge Ingstad found the site, Anne Stine Ingstad, an archaeologist, led the excavation.



Helge Ingstad uncovers a stone fireplace.



Anne Stine Ingstad works at the archaeological site.

Over the next eight years, archaeologists from around the world worked on the site and uncovered the remains of buildings. The buildings had a similar structure and design to those in Iceland and Greenland from the same period. Inside the structures, archaeologists found a number of items that confirmed that this was an early Viking settlement.

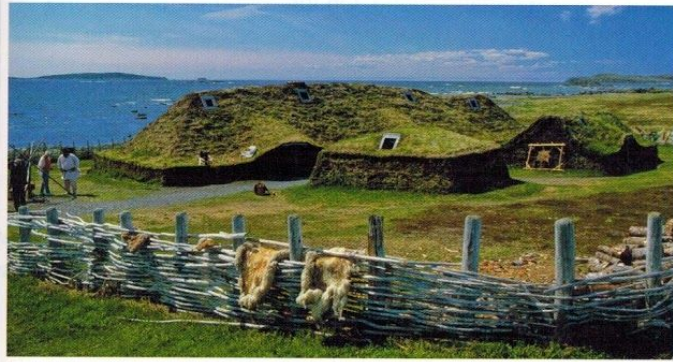
This Norse coin was found at the site of a former Native American settlement in Maine, United States. Since there was no evidence of Norse settlements that far south, historians did not believe that the Vikings travelled to that village. What explanation might there be for a Norse coin being found in Maine?



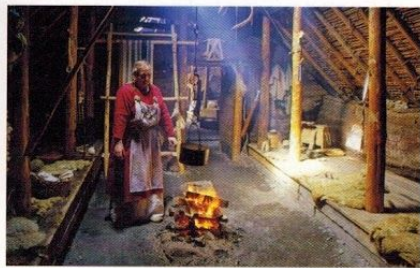


## What Was the Settlement Like?

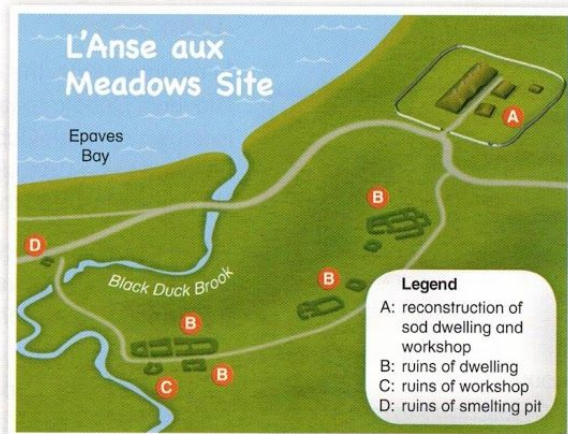
The settlement at L'Anse aux Meadows was reconstructed using archaeologists' findings.



This photo shows the outside of the reconstructed buildings.



This photo shows the inside of the reconstructed dwelling. Viking dwellings housed many families. A variety of activities occurred inside them, including carpentry and weaving.



This diagram shows the buildings at L'Anse aux Meadows. Iron from nearby was processed in the smelting pit. The iron was then made into tools in one of the dwellings. Do you think the Vikings wanted to stay at this settlement for a long or short time? Explain.

### Thinking about Significance

People from all over the world visit L'Anse aux Meadows to see what it was like, and to learn about the Vikings. Many people consider the site a significant part of Canadian history. What do you think makes it significant?

### Inquire and Apply

- 1 Why do you think the Norse left the settlement at L'Anse aux Meadows? What kind of evidence would an archaeologist need to answer this question?
- 2 The museum curators at L'Anse aux Meadows have asked you to create a poster to promote tourism. What would you highlight about the significance of the L'Anse aux Meadows site that would make people want to go there?



## Who Were Some of the Other Early European Explorers?

### Basque Whalers

Archaeologists have found evidence of whaling stations from the 1500s in Red Bay, Labrador. The area is believed to have been used by the Basques, a group of Indigenous people who came from parts of Spain and France. For nearly 100 years, hundreds of Basque sailors spent summers in Red Bay, hunting whales. By the early 1600s, though, the Basques stopped hunting in Red Bay. Historians are not sure why.

### John Cabot



**COUNTRY:** England

#### EXPLORATION FACTS:

Cabot made two journeys, in 1497 and 1498. His second journey remains clouded in mystery. Historians believe Cabot and his crew may have been lost at sea.

Oral histories of some eastern First Nations peoples tell about the arrival of strangers. A Mi'kmaq story tells how a girl dreamed that she saw a floating island. On the island were trees and living creatures. A day later, her dream came true as an island floated toward shore. The island turned out to be a ship, the trees were its masts, and the creatures were Europeans. This was the Mi'kmaq's first meeting with Europeans.

### Explorers of Eastern Canada

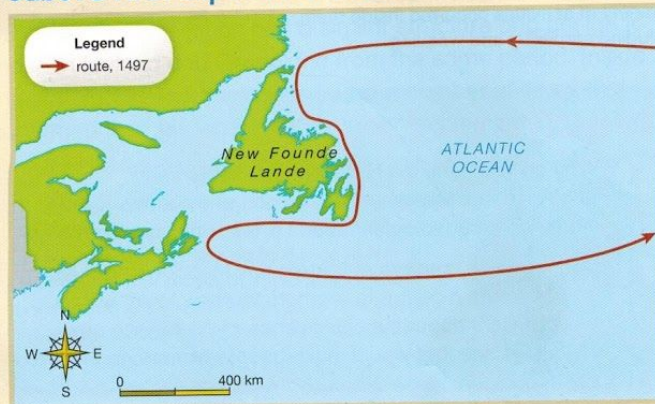
The earliest Europeans to arrive in eastern Canada thought they had reached Asia. They quickly realized their mistake. They also realized that First Nations peoples were already living there, and that this land was rich in resources. Soon, many European explorers came seeking wealth.

### John Cabot

In the late 1400s, the king of England hired Italian explorer Giovanni Caboto to look for a water route to Asia. This explorer is known as John Cabot in English. Cabot landed on what is believed to be Canada's east coast and claimed it for England. He named the land that he saw "New Founde Lande."

When Cabot returned to England, he told about waters that were full of fish. News spread. Many European fishers began travelling to the waters off the island of Newfoundland to fish.

### Cabot's First Exploration Route

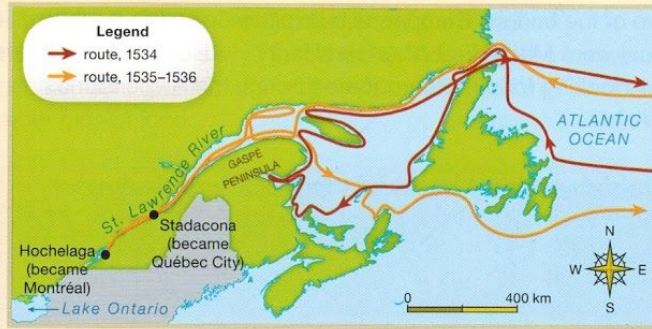




## Jacques Cartier

The king of France heard stories about the successful explorations of other European countries. In 1534, he chose Jacques Cartier to explore and claim lands for France, and to find a water route to Asia.

### Cartier's Exploration Routes



### Jacques Cartier



**COUNTRY:** France

#### EXPLORATION FACTS:

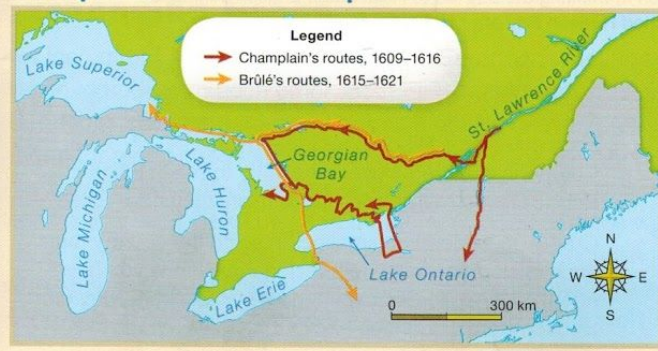
Cartier made three expeditions to eastern Canada, the first in 1534, the second starting in 1535. On his third trip, in 1541, Cartier brought with him a large group of French **colonists** to settle near Stadacona. The settlement lasted less than a year.

## Samuel de Champlain

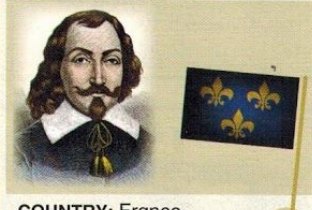
In 1603, the French sent an expedition to Nova Scotia and Québec. A mapmaker named Samuel de Champlain was part of this expedition. Champlain would later go on to explore and map areas farther west.

A 16-year-old boy named Étienne Brûlé travelled with Champlain to Canada. Brûlé went on many expeditions for Champlain to explore farther inland. Brûlé may have been the first European to see the Ottawa Valley, Georgian Bay, and four of the five Great Lakes.

### Champlain's and Brûlé's Exploration Routes



### Samuel de Champlain



**COUNTRY:** France

#### EXPLORATION FACTS:

Champlain spent many months exploring the St. Lawrence River and Great Lakes area between 1609 and 1616. He was greatly aided by First Nations guides.



