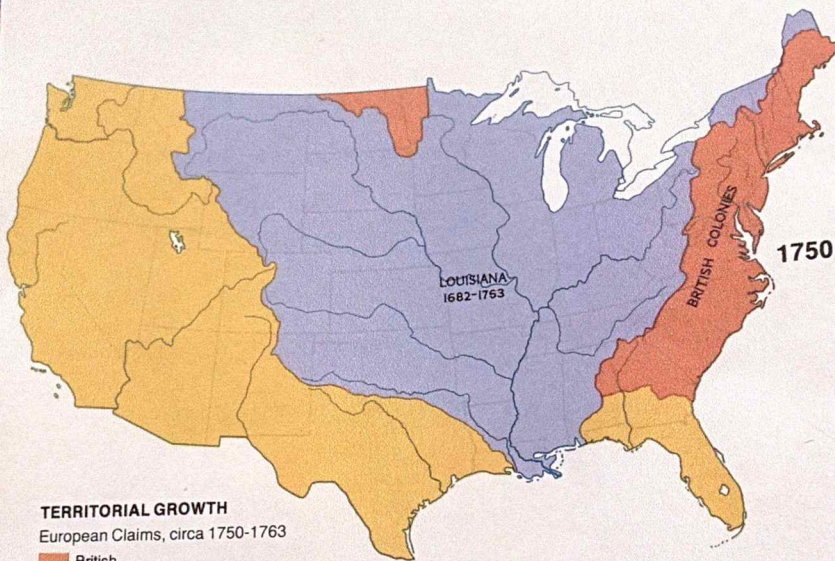


First claims on a continent

With a royal grant for half of North America, Virginia became the first English colony. Other charters went to proprietors and commercial endeavors such as the Massachusetts Bay Company.

Like most colonies, Massachusetts claimed lands "from the Atlantic . . . to the South Sea on the West Parte." Transcontinental claims engendered disputes with France and Spain.



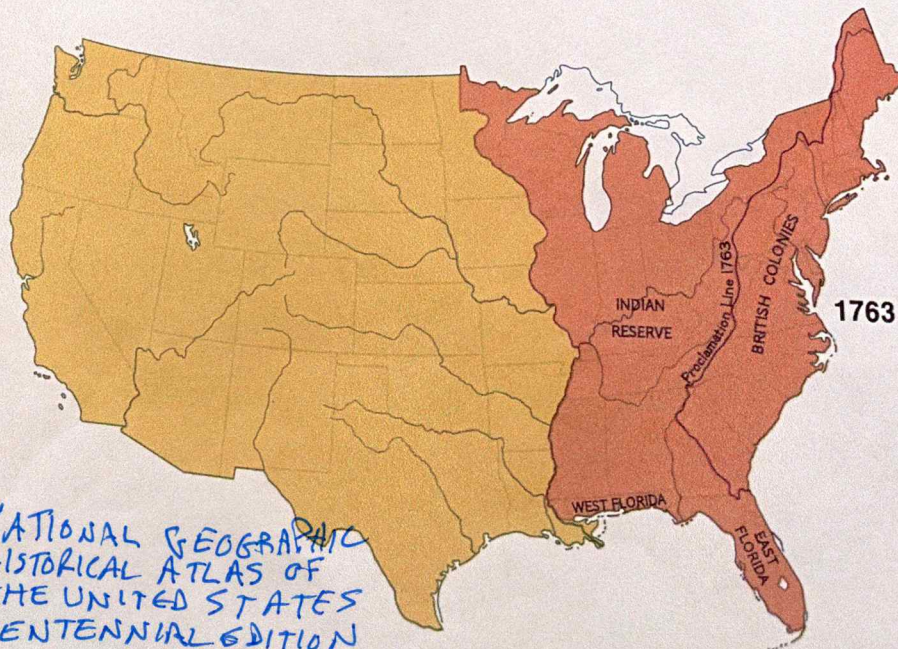
TERRITORIAL GROWTH
 European Claims, circa 1750-1763

- British
- French
- Spanish

Crossed claims & war

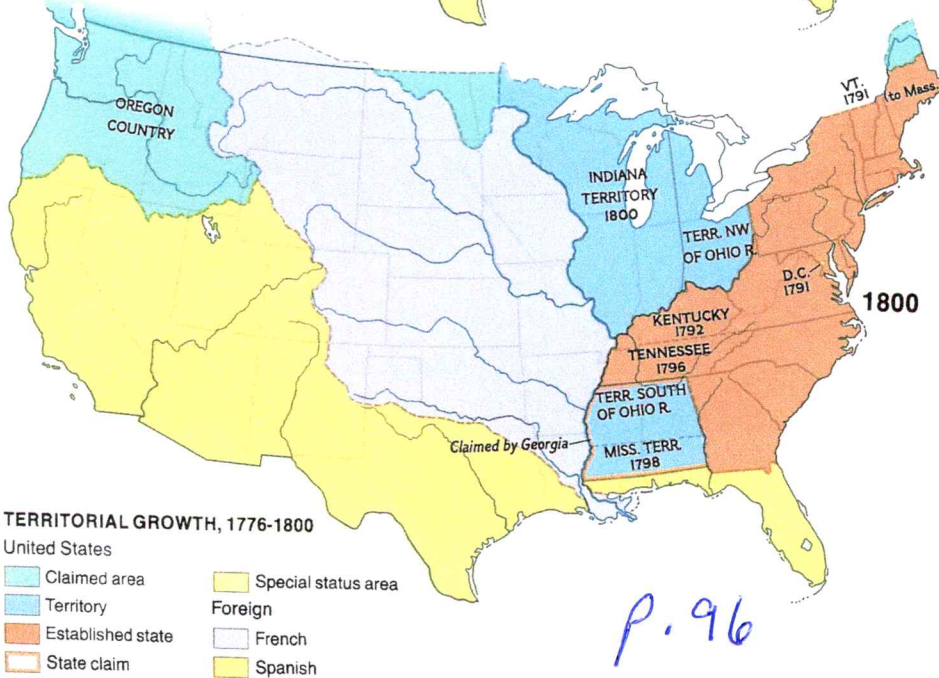
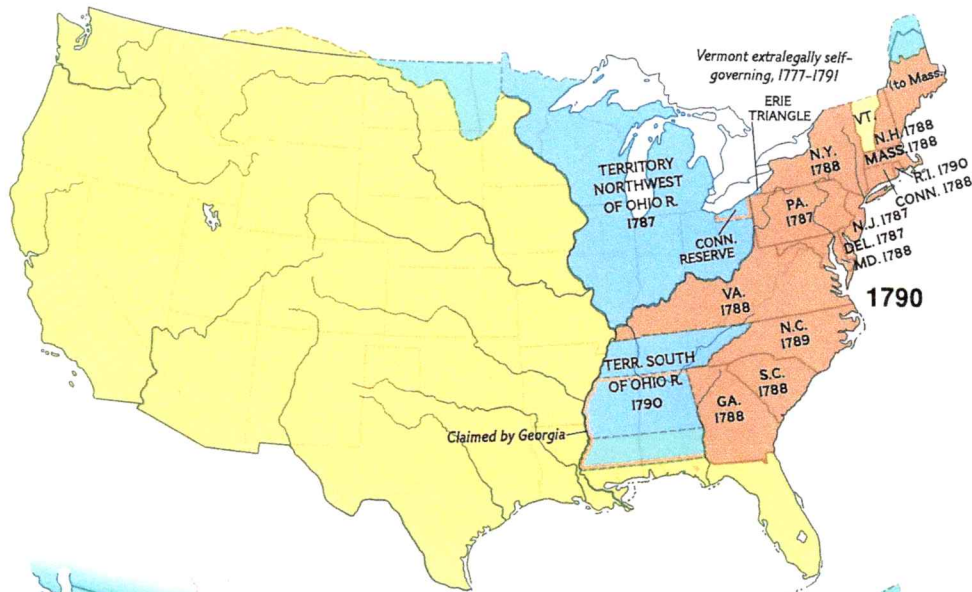
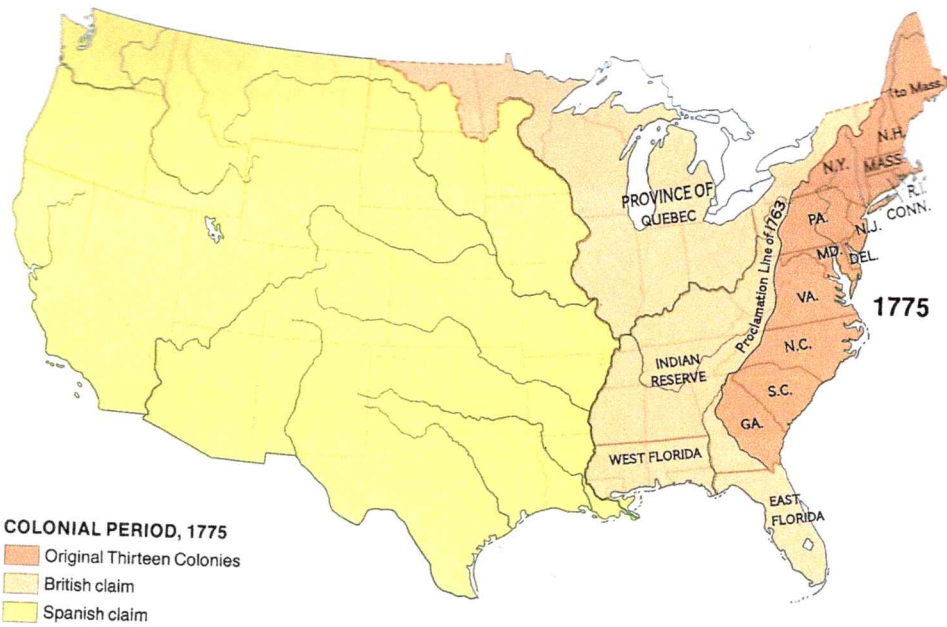
On the eve of the French and Indian War, fewer than 80,000 Frenchmen inhabited Canada and the disputed Ohio and Mississippi Valleys. British colonists numbered 1,300,000. Battles near Lake Champlain and Lake George were indecisive until new British strength was committed. The storming of Québec ended French hopes in 1759.

Driven from 1755 by British refugees for Louisiana under the Their narrow of frontage



The colonial shuffle

The Treaty of Paris in 1763 ended France's dominion in North America. Canada and lands east of the Mississippi went to Britain; Spain ceded Florida to Britain and received all French holdings west of the Mississippi. Britain's reservation of western lands for Indians angered colonists.



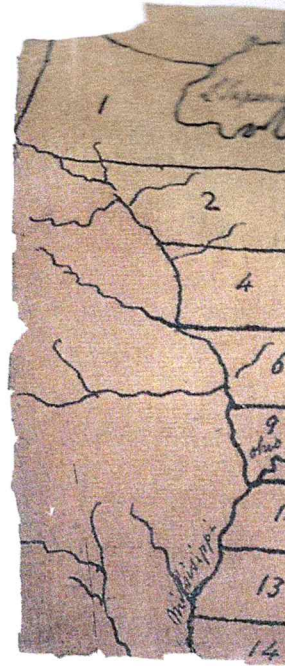
TERRITORIAL GROWTH, 1776-1800

- United States
- Claimed area
 - Territory
 - Established state
 - State claim
 - Special status area
 - Foreign
 - French
 - Spanish

New states from old

Victory in war brought

Polypotam



Thomas Jefferson looked beyond the Appalachian and saw decimals, squares, and equal proportions. Heading a committee charged with recommending a new lands policy, Jefferson (before) in 1784 devised a plan that freed the land from European systems of colonial experience—especially the no-nonsense grid of the New England township. Land would be divided into “hundreds” ten miles squared in cardinal direction. After a year of debate the Land Ordinance of 1785 substituted the more practical six-mile-square township for the son’s hundred.

In a separate proposal Jefferson advocated that 14 states be created between the Appalachians and the Mississippi (map, above). Washington objected that many of the states would lack access to major rivers. In 1791, Washington, a surveyor himself, pondered how straight borders would conform to Indian land cessions.

Changes came with legislation that would carry the United States westward expansion. The Northwest Ordinance of 1787