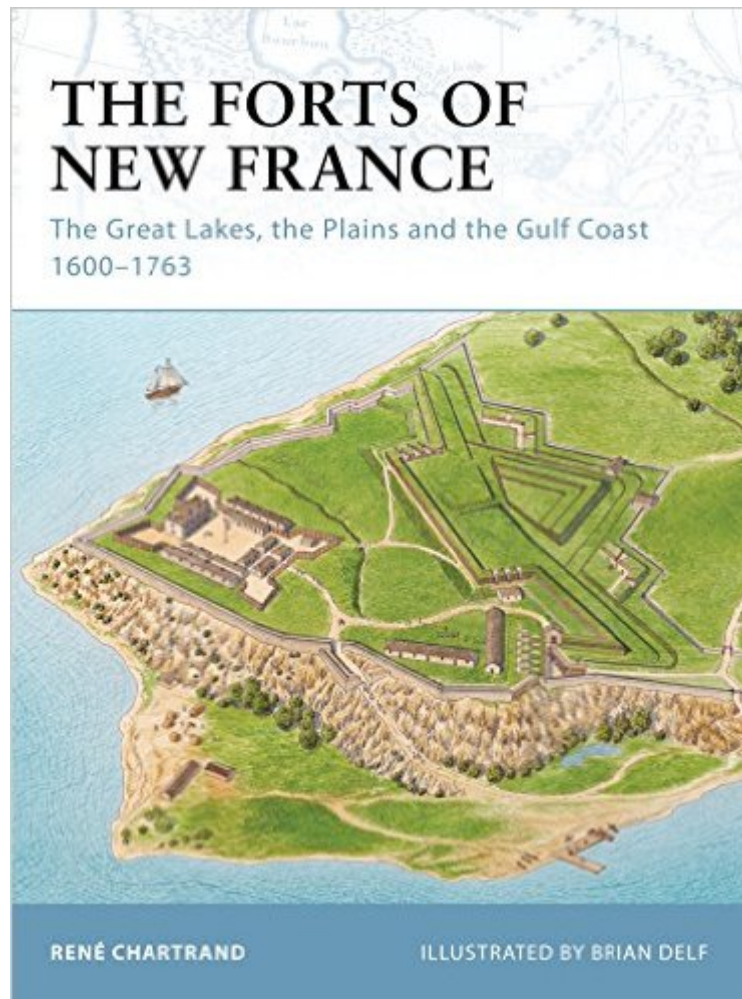


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The Forts Of New France: The Great Lakes, The Plains And The Gulf Coast 1600-1763 (Fortress)



Synopsis

"New France" consisted of the area colonized and ruled by France in North America from the 16th to the 18th centuries. This title, which follows on from Fortress 27: French Fortresses in North America 1534-1763: Qu_bec, Montr_al, Louisbourg and New Orleans and Fortress 75: The Forts of New France in Northeast America 1600-1763, takes a look at the forts guarding the frontier defenses of New France from the Great Lakes, down the Mississippi River to the Gulf of Mexico. Among the sites examined are forts Cr_vecoeur (Illinois), Biloxi (on the Mississippi), St Jean-Baptiste (Louisiana), Natchitoches (Louisiana), de Chartres (on the Mississippi), Cond_ (Alabama), and Toulouse (Alabama).

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Customer Reviews

THE FORTS OF NEW FRANCE: THE GREAT LAKES, THE PLAINS, AND THE GULF COAST, 1600-1763RENE CHARTRANDOSPREY PUBLISHING, 2010QUALITY SOFTCOVER, \$18.95, 64 PAGES, PHOTOGRAPHS, ILLUSTRATIONS, CHRONOLOGY, GLOSSARY, MAPS, BIBLIOGRAPHYBy the beginning of the 18th Century, during the wars of Louis XIV that pitted English and French colonies against each other, Canada took on a strategic importance that far outweighed its commercial value. For geo-political imperatives, permission was granted by Paris to establish a colony at Detroit in 1701. Canadian settlers moved westwards into the upper Mississippi basin in what became known as the Illinois Country. At the mouth of the Mississippi, the colony of Louisiana was settled directly from France. After 1713, Governor Vaudreuil had a chain of forts built

in the interior to serve as bases for trade and negotiation with Native Americans and military officers replaced missionaries in the role of diplomatic agents. In addition to this line of forts that kept the English colonists east of the Appalachian watershed, French traders in competition with the Hudson's Bay Company for hinterland furs moved beyond the Great Lakes onto the Western Plains, as far as the Missouri Coteau and Athabasca region, establishing their headquarters at Kaministiquia (now Thunder Bay, Ontario) in 1717. To the south, they ranged over the area drained by the Missouri, Arkansa, and Red Rivers. Author Rene Chartrand has written another excellent book on the French forts that were built along the Great Lakes, the Western Plains, and the Gulf Coast. It is well-illustrated as well as written but there are some needed clarifications and mistakes that need to be corrected.

This book is part of a two volume series intended to cover French fortifications in North America from, roughly, the time the French first came to America to attempt to seriously colonize the area until the Seven Years War (1600 to 1763). The first volume of the set, "The Forts of New France in Northeast America", covers the fortifications the French built on the Atlantic while the second volume, this one ("The Forts of New France: The Great Lakes, the Plains and the Gulf Coast"), covers the balance. The fortifications set covered by the first volume were primarily Vauban style fortifications made of stone and masonry, were large and were intended to defend against European opponents with heavy artillery such as the English. The second volume's fortifications were, by contrast, very small and improvised in nature, intended primarily to hold off attacking Indians. There were only two or so Vauban style fortifications in the second volume that were made out of stone or masonry that could hold off a European army equipped with artillery. Nevertheless, this chain of forts enabled the French to build up a basis for trade, colonization and a legal basis for territorial claims in the interior of North America. Unfortunately very little has been written on the subject, unlike on the heavy French forts on the North Atlantic Coast. This book hence fills a vacuum in the literature. It does this quite well. It is well researched from, predominately from primary resources, in terms of the fortifications per se along with experiences at those fortifications of both soldiers in combat and others in a variety of roles (i.e., missionaries, merchants, etc.). One sees how small and weak most of these forts were. Many had, for example, little more than picket fences.

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