

British origin. The bulk of the remaining 10 per cent consists of other European groups.

The native peoples, the Indian and Inuit, live mainly in northern Quebec. Fort Chimo, Quebec's leading Inuit community, was founded in 1828 as a Hudson's Bay Company trading post. The Cree nation, some 6,500 in number, are in the southwest. Modern development has brought profound changes in their lives, and they have combined native traditions with the styles of modern Quebec.

### *History*

It is almost certain that the first men on Quebec soil, several thousand years ago, were Asians, who crossed the Bering Strait and spread out across North America. Some of these — called Indians by the first Europeans, who thought they had reached the East — settled in Quebec. The country immediately north of the St. Lawrence River was inhabited chiefly by two scattered Indian groups — the Montagnais and the Algonquins. They were nomadic and lived off the land by hunting moose and other forest animals and by spearing salmon and eels in the rivers, lakes and sea.

French explorer Jacques Cartier and his sailors landed in Gaspé in July 1534 and claimed the new territory on behalf of the King of France. Cartier made two later voyages in 1535 and 1542, but interest in the new colony

waned until 1608, when Samuel de Champlain constructed a wooden *habitation* at a spot the Indians named "Québec". It was a natural rock citadel with a commanding view of the St. Lawrence. The French leader was soon on friendly terms with local Indians, who induced him in 1609 to participate in a raid against a neighbouring tribe — the Iroquois. Thus, a bitter conflict began between the French and the Iroquois which lasted more than 100 years. Fearing that the existence of their colony was at stake, French authorities intervened in 1672 by sending a new governor (Comte de Frontenac), a new intendant (Jean Talon) and a new bishop (Bishop Laval) to Quebec. This marked the beginning of a remarkable period in the fortunes of "New France", as Quebec was then known. The economy flourished and the population grew.

A series of European wars punctuated the first half of the eighteenth century. The Anglo-French rivalry in Europe led to periodic fighting in North America, which came to a climax in 1759. The British army, under General James Wolfe, landed at Quebec City, and after a sharp battle, defeated the French forces under the command of Louis-Joseph, Marquis de Montcalm. Both generals died during the engagement on the Plains of Abraham. With the fall of New France, a British military administration was organized to govern the colony.