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Well before Columbus discovered America in 1492, prehistoric tribes from Asia had come across the Bering Strait. and around AD 1000, the Vikings, the first European visitors, had tried to settle in northern Newfoundland. By the time subsequent Europeans arrived, Canadas Indian tribes had already developed a multitude of languages, customs, religious beliefs, trading patterns, arts and crafts, laws and governments. Although a number of European countries were interested in establishing settlements in the Americas, it was French explorer Jacques Cartier who made the first claim on the area surrounding the St Lawrence River in 1534. Another French explorer, Samuel de Champlain, founded Quebec City in the early 1600s. In 1663 Canada, now home to about 3000 French settlers, became a province of France. Just as the French started to thrive on the fur trade, the British entered the scene, founding the Hudsons Bay Company in 1670 to add a bit of friendly competition. For a while, the two European cultures coexisted peacefully. Then, in 1745, British troops captured a French fort in Nova Scotia - the struggle for control of the new land was on. The turning point in what became known as the Seven Years War arrived when the British defeated the French at Quebec City in 1759. At the Treaty of Paris in 1763, France handed Canada over to Britain. By the end of the American Revolution (1775-83), a migration of about 50,000 British Loyalists

from the USA created a more even balance between the French and British populations. After the War of 1812 - the last war between Canada and the USA, in which Canada was victorious - Britain, fearful of losing Canada as it had the American Colonies, proclaimed the British North America Act (BNA Act) in 1867. The Act established the Dominion of Canada and became Canadas equivalent of a constitution. By 1885 the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway - one of Canadas great historical sagas - joined the countrys east and west coasts. By 1912 all provinces had become part of the central government except Newfoundland, which finally joined in 1949. After WWI Canada grew slowly in stature and prosperity, becoming a voluntary member of the Commonwealth in 1931. With the onset of WWII, Canada once again fought alongside Britain against Germany, though this time it also entered into defense agreements with the USA, declaring war on Japan after the attack on Pearl Harbor. In the years after WWII, Canada experienced a huge wave of European immigration, with a further influx of Asians, Arabs, Indians, Italians, Hispanics and Caribbeans arriving in the 1960s. The postwar era was a period of economic expansion and prosperity. In 1967 Canada celebrated its 100th anniversary with Expo, the Worlds Fair in Montreal, as one of the highlights. Since 1975, a series of land rights agreements has been signed with Canadas native peoples, giving them some control over vast swathes of the northern portion of the country. The social upheavals of the 1960s brought to the surface the festering resentments that French-speaking Quebec had with English-speaking Canada. In 1976 the Parti

Quebecois (PQ), advocating separatism, won the provincial election in Quebec, though sentiments on the issue have since waxed and waned. In the 1980 sovereignty referendum, the separatists were defeated by 60% of the vote. In October 1995, the vote was extremely close, with Canada coming within a few thousand votes of breaking up. The prime minister, Jean Chr é tien, has since attempted to appease the Quebeckers by recognising the province as a distinct society. In 2000, Chr é tien held an early election and secured his third consecutive term. Meanwhile, the passing of former prime minister Pierre Trudeau continues to be mourned, and disappointment over the nations failed bid to hold the 2008 Olympics (losing to Beijing) is only slowly waning. 100Test 下载频道开通，各类考试题目直接下载。详细请访问 www.100test.com