The Inevitable Conflict
The French and Indian War was the inevitable outcome of competition between two eighteenth-century European military powers. At its outset, the French and English had been exploiting the resources of North America for nearly 200 years. The French, (population 75,000) controlled eastern Canada, south through the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys, to the Louisiana Territory. The British, (population 1.5 million) controlled the Atlantic coast from Nova Scotia to Georgia.

By 1750 English traders were expanding into the Ohio Valley. In response to these incursions, the French burned the English supply station, Trent's Fort, at the forks of the Ohio in 1754 and replaced it with Fort Duquesne. This became the major fortification in the region. Supplies traveled south along the Venango Path from Fort de la Presque Isle, Erie, through Fort Lallybouf, Fort Meacham, and finally to Fort Duquesne.

At the age of twenty-one, George Washington was sent by Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia to demand the French withdraw from the region. When Washington reached Fort Lallybouf in December of 1753, with an escort of seven men, the French refused to withdraw. Dinwiddie sent Washington back to the Ohio Valley with a larger force in May 1754. On his way to attack Fort Duquesne, Washington encountered a detachment of approximately forty French soldiers commanded by Joseph Coulon de Villiers de Jumonville. Within fifteen minutes, at the battle of Jumonville Glen, most of the French were killed or captured. The dead included Jumonville. Washington quickly retreated to the Great Meadow. There he built Fort Necessity, poorly sited on lowland. On July 3-4, his detachment of approximately 350 Virginians was quickly surrounded by 600 French and Indians led by Jumonville's older brother. Rain filled Fort Necessity and the gunpowder failed, forcing Washington to surrender.

When news reached Great Britain General Braddock marched into the Ohio Valley with 2100 troops to destroy Fort Duquesne. Eight miles from their objective, Braddock's troops were attacked on July 9, 1755, by a small but aggressive force of French and Indians. Within five hours the British suffered over 800 casualties. Braddock was mortally wounded and his army was routed back across the Monongahela. This catastrophic defeat left the settlers of western Pennsylvania unprotected and allowed the Indian allies of the French to initiate a series of raids on settlers of both western Pennsylvania and the Susquehanna Valley.

The Defensive System of Forts
After Braddock's disaster the British built the Susquehanna Valley would be the strategic center of the upcoming conflict and created a series of forts along the eastern side of the Blue Mountain. Most of these were no more than simple fortified homes serving as safe havens for local settlers. Samuel Hunter's Fort, still in use, on the Susquehanna River near Harrisburg served as a rallying point after an Indian attack on Penn's Creek, October 16, 1755. Fort Hunter was transferred to the command of Colonel Chapman's Augusta Regiment in April 1756, and a new fort was built at the mouth of Fishing Creek. Fort Hunter and Fort Halifax served as supply depots for Fort Augusta.

Fort Augusta was the largest British fort east of the Allegheny Mountains with walls 750 yards long topped by wooden fortifications. The fort garrisoned as many as 400 troops. During the war, the fort maintained patrols along the Susquehanna River and sheltered settler during Indian raids. However, the main conflict took place in the Ohio Valley and Fort Augusta was never involved in a military engagement.

Fort Loudoun was built by Pennsylvania militiamen in 1756 on Matthew Patton's farm, burned in an earlier Indian raid. This fort was also part of the Blue Mountain line of defense. In 1758, with a command of 7000 troops, General Forbes set out to relieve Fort Duquesne. He built a road from Carlisle to the forks of the Ohio that included the major Forts of Bedford, Ligonier, and Pitt. Fort Loudoun was part of the Forts Road and served as a supply depot in this campaign that eventually removed the French from western Pennsylvania.

A Temporary Peace
With the Ohio Valley secure, the British force invaded Canada and captured Montreal in 1759. This effectively ended the war on the North American mainland. Known in Europe as the Seven Year's War, it ended in North America with the signing of the Treaty of Paris, February 10, 1763. The Indian allies of the French were defeated and the peace treaty included the cession of all land west of the Appalachian Mountains for a 20 year period.

After the war, the Susquehanna Valley would become the strategic center of the British army in North America. The British garrisoned the forts along the Ohio Valley and the Susquehanna River, and the valley became a route for the British army to move to and from the southern colonies.

The Archaeology of the Pennsylvania Indian War

The Pennsylvania Indian War was a significant event in the history of the state, and its archaeological legacy is still being explored today. Archaeologists have identified numerous sites related to the war, including Forts Augusta and Loudoun, and the sites of the Battle of Bushy Run and Fort Necessity. These sites provide valuable insights into the strategies and tactics used by both sides, as well as the impact of the war on the local Native American population.

The archaeological record also offers a glimpse into the lives of the soldiers and settlers who lived in and around the forts. Researchers have studied the artifacts and remains found at these sites, including weapons, tools, and personal effects, to better understand the daily life of those who lived during the war. This research has helped to shape our understanding of the broader historical context of the war and its effects on the region.

In addition to the archaeological remains, the Pennsylvania Archaeological Site Survey (PASS) has been a significant tool in preserving the nation's archaeological heritage. This program has helped to identify and protect archaeological sites throughout the state, ensuring that future generations can learn from the past.

The Pennsylvania State Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology in Harrisburg is one of 25 historic sites and museums administered by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC). The museum is located on the Pennsylvania Trails of History and is one of 25 historic sites and museums across Pennsylvania. The museum is home to a range of exhibits and collections related to Pennsylvania's history, including the state's archaeology and anthropology.

Visitors can explore nearly 16,000 years of human history in Pennsylvania's Archaeology and Anthropology Gallery, which includes exhibits on the state's prehistory, colonial, and Revolutionary eras, as well as the Native American experience. The museum also features fascinating heritage with exhibits examining the dawn of geologic time, emphasizing the state's significant collections interpreting the state's fascinating heritage. With exhibits examining the dawn of geologic time, emphasizing the state's fascinating heritage.
The archaeology of these French and Indian War forts has focused on the documentation of military features such as stockades, bastions, officer and enlisted personnel quarters, water wells and the recovery of hallmark artifacts such as gunflints, musket balls and buttons. Archaeologists have also examined dietary remains to document the lives and health of soldiers, and ceramics (dishes) which document the lifestyle of these people. Nearly all of these sites continued to be occupied after the French and Indian War, some as military posts and others as farmsteads. Many are now covered by small urban centers thereby complicating their excavation and interpretation. Interestingly, these sites were also the locations of Native American settlements, many of which document thousands of years of Native American prehistory. This increases not only the complexity of their excavation but also their significance.

The following four examples range in size from Fort Augusta, the largest British fort ever built east of the Allegheny to Fort Hunter, a small supply depot. Excavation has led to an improved understanding of warfare during this period and also enhanced our understanding of military and rural life on the frontier during a time of conflict and change.

**Fort Loudoun—A Provincial Fort in Franklin County that played a major role in the Forbes Campaign that regained the Ohio Valley**

Fort Loudon (1758–1759) was built on the site of the Mathew Patton farm after it was burned in an early Indian raid. The garrison included as many as 400 enlisted men and officers. The fort site was completely excavated by The State Museum of Pennsylvania in 1970–1981. The stockade was constructed by Pennsylvania militia using British plans. The walls were 127 feet long with bastions on three of the four corners. The walls are somewhat haphazardly aligned and the uprights were placed in a trench. The triangular shaped bastions were supported by the fort walls with a tripod arrangement of uprights on the outside walls. The Patton house was used as the officer’s quarters. One of the most interesting finds came from the well. This feature produced a variety of leather goods and an intact water bucket. In November, 1758, the local citizens became enraged over the excessive military control of their business affairs and laid siege with continuous musket fire for two days. The fort was abandoned by the British on November 28. Some historians consider this action to be the first act of the American Revolution.

**Fort LeBoeuf—A French Fort along the Venango Path in Erie County**

The site of Fort LeBoeuf (1753–1756) in Waterford was the location of French, British and American fortifications. It was excavated in 1937–1938 with federal funding from the Works Progress Administration (WPA) by Harry Schoff and a crew of local laborers. The American blockhouse was located and musket balls, gunflints, and glass trade beads were recovered from its location. Additional testing across several blocks of Waterford produced evidence of charred timbers and burned artifacts such as nails, glass and lead. Historic documents verify the burning of both the French and American blockhouses. A series of trenches excavated to a depth of eight feet yielded evidence of a foundation and a concentration of musket balls, gun parts and a cut silver Spanish coin, a common form of currency in the eighteenth century. The extreme depth of over-burden in this area was attributed to destruction of one of the previous forts. The soil deposits and artifact concentrations were sufficient for Schuff to surmise that “the work at Waterford has established beyond all doubt the traditional site of the Le Boeuf Fort.” More recent investigations conducted by Dr. Reneta Wolynec, Edinboro University, confirmed the presence of charred remains of the forts.