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Apple Press Publishing
Alliston ON L9R 0H3

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ISBN 0 919972 37 3

Computer graphics and design: Katherine Turco
Cover: Mouse Path Graphics
Editor: Deborah Sherman
Printed by: Georgian Copy & Printers Inc., Barrie, ON.

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We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Book Publishing Industry Development Program for our publishing activities.

Settlers in New France



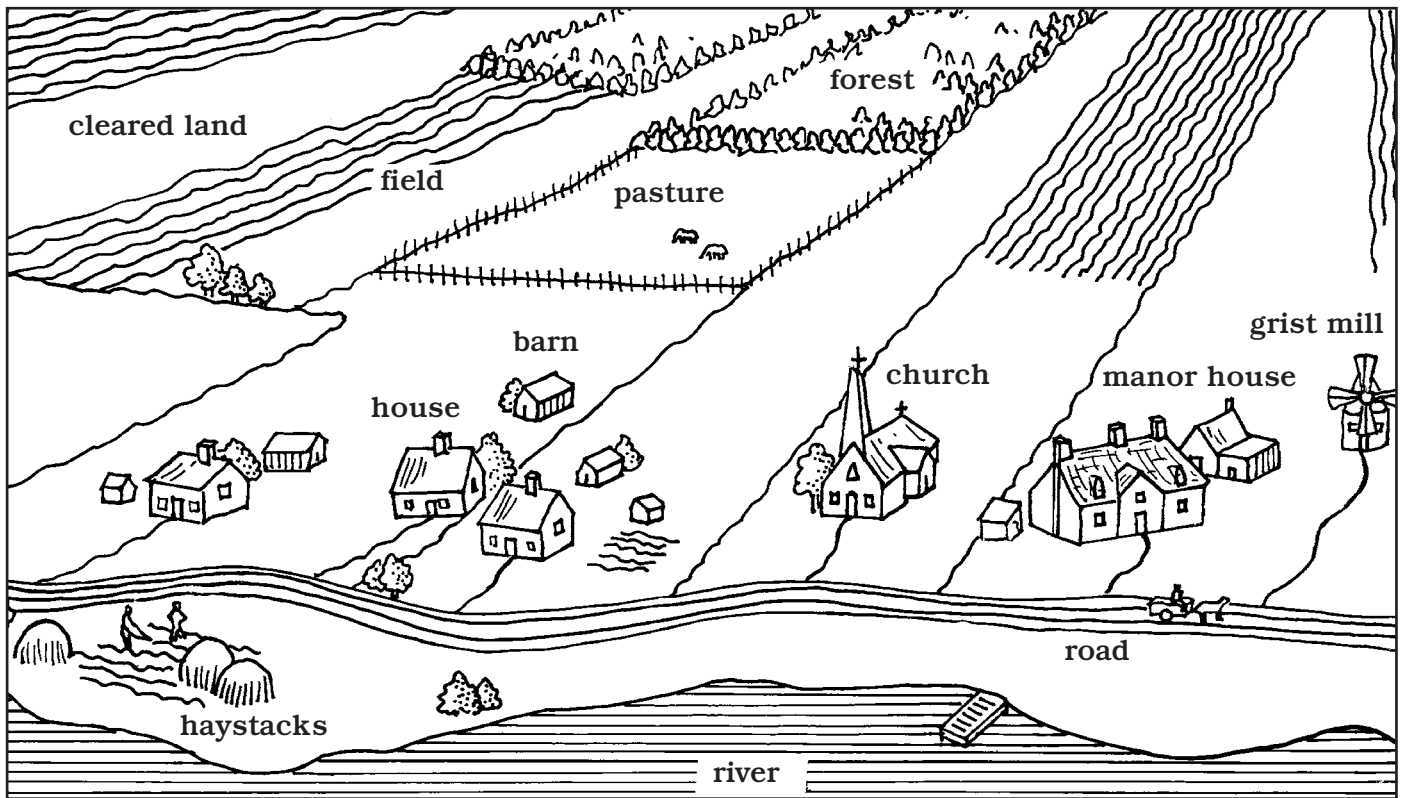
Settlers in New France

This picture shows the first settlers arriving in New France. At that time, much of the land that is now Québec, Ontario and the Maritimes was called New France.

In the distance are the sailing ships which brought the settlers from France to their new home. The grass and the leaves on the trees show that it is probably summer. The people are dressed in summer clothing.

Some of the men unload barrels and bundles of food, clothing and tools. The men on the right build a small shelter to be used until a permanent house is built. Nearby, two ladies in fine dresses watch. Beside them, two gentlemen in wigs and topcoats direct the other workers.

Settling the Land

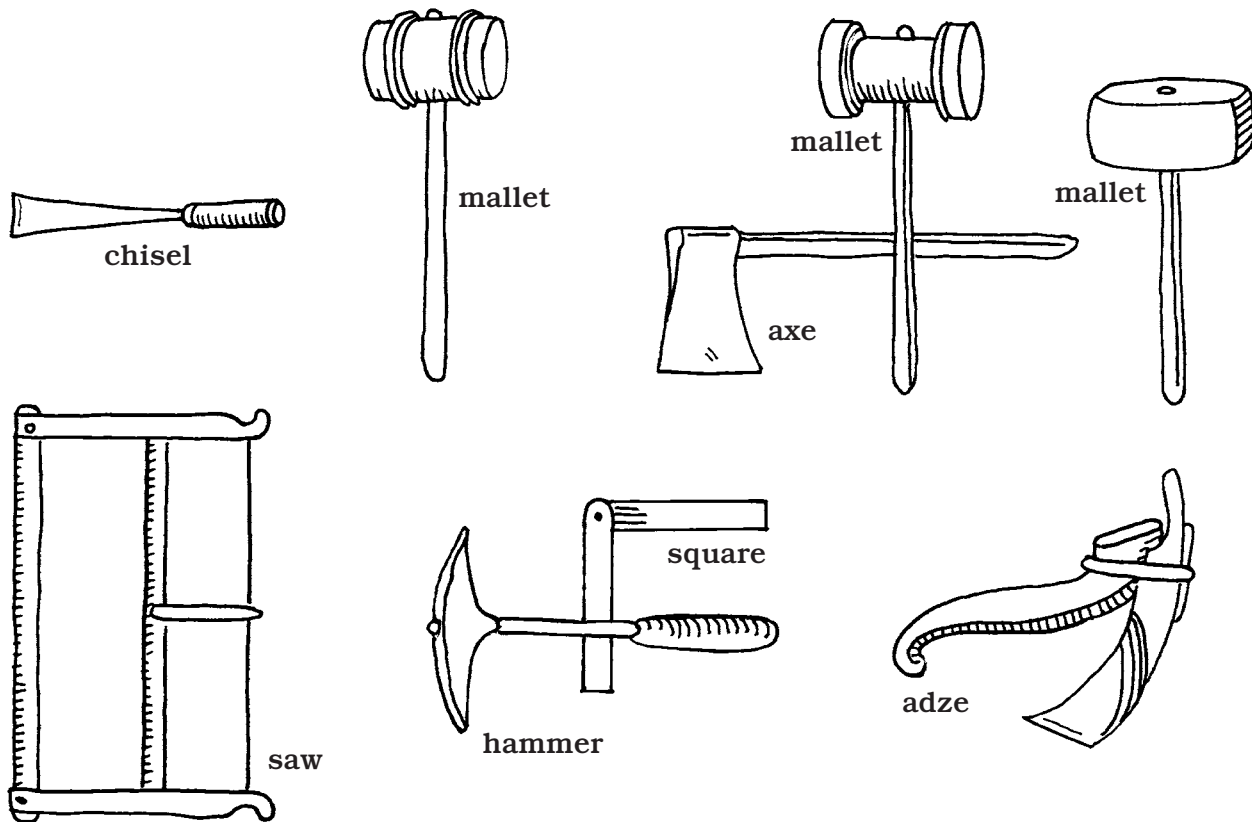


Settlers in New France

The first settlers in New France were mainly farmers from France. They settled along the rivers of the St. Lawrence Valley. At the time, New France was owned by the King of France. To help settle the land, the king had the land divided into large sections called seigneuries. The king gave these sections of land to important people called seigneurs. The seigneurs lived on their seigneurie in a manor house. Most of the seigneuries had a church and a mill for grinding grain into flour.

The seigneur divided his land into long, narrow lots usually bordering a river. He rented these lots to people who were willing to clear the land and farm it. Such farmers were called habitants. In return for use of the land, the habitants paid rent to their seigneur in the form of grain and animals. The habitants also worked on their seigneur's manor house and on his roads.

Building a House



Settlers in New France

Field stones were used to build the walls of the earliest farmhouses in New France. The roof of the house was steep to allow rain and snow to drain away. The windows were small with shutters. In the centre of the house stood the fireplace and chimney.

Because wood was plentiful in New France, many of the later farmhouses were made of squared logs. The logs were placed on a foundation of large stones. Strips of wood were fastened to the inside walls, then covered with plaster made from clay. The outside walls were also covered with plaster and then whitewashed.

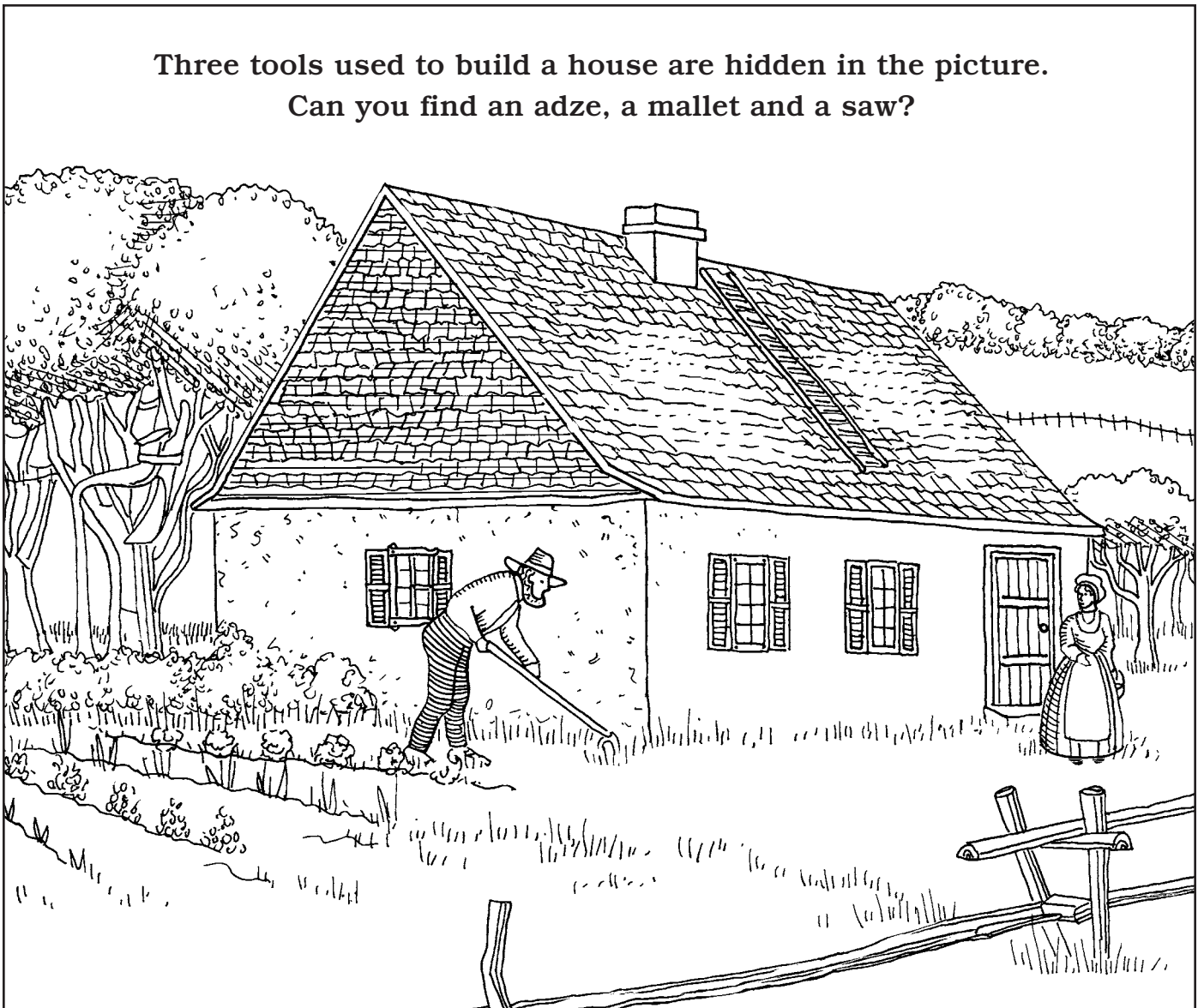
The farmer usually built his own house, often with the help of a carpenter and using only hand tools. The completed house was small, but solid, and protected the family against the cold and wind.

An Early Farmhouse

The walls of this early farmhouse are thick and solid. They are made of stones gathered from nearby fields. The stones are held together with mortar. The steep roof is covered with wooden shingles and curved at the bottom to help shed heavy snow. A ladder was placed on the roof in case any sparks from the chimney started a fire on the shingles. The ladder helped the farmer climb onto the roof quickly to put out the fire.

Glass was expensive, so greased paper or stretched animal skin was used for windows. The shutters were closed to protect the windows during hailstorms and to keep in the heat on cold winter nights.

**Three tools used to build a house are hidden in the picture.
Can you find an adze, a mallet and a saw?**

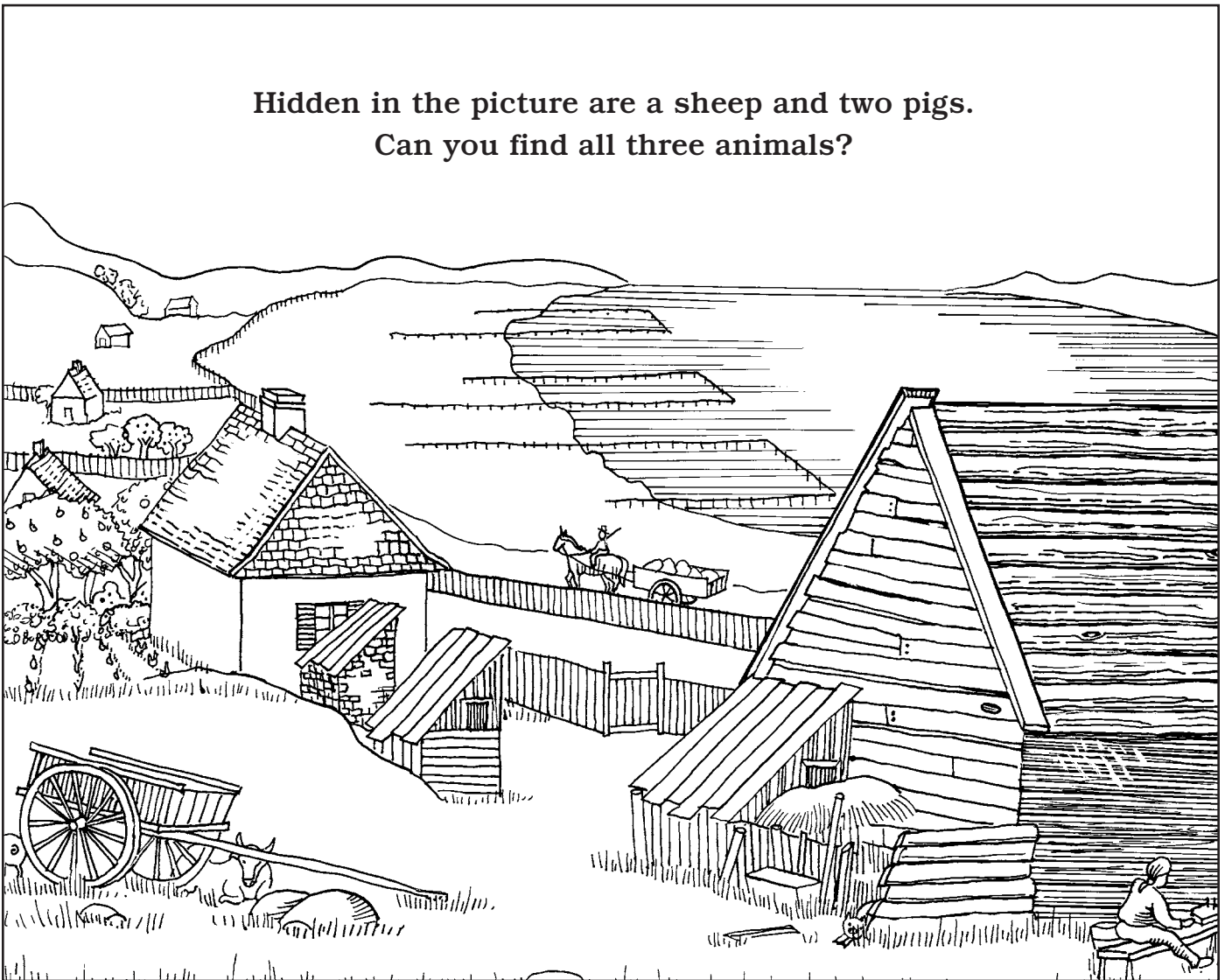


A Habitant's Farm

The earliest farms in New France were located along the rivers of the St. Lawrence Valley. Along the rivers, the land was flat and the soil was fertile for growing crops.

This picture shows part of a habitant's farm. The farm buildings are built close together and face the river. The wooden building to the right is a barn. The farmhouse to the left is made of stone. The small building beside the house is an outdoor bake oven. Behind the house are some fruit trees and a vegetable garden. In the distance, fences can be seen along the river. The fences in the water are for catching fish.

Hidden in the picture are a sheep and two pigs.
Can you find all three animals?



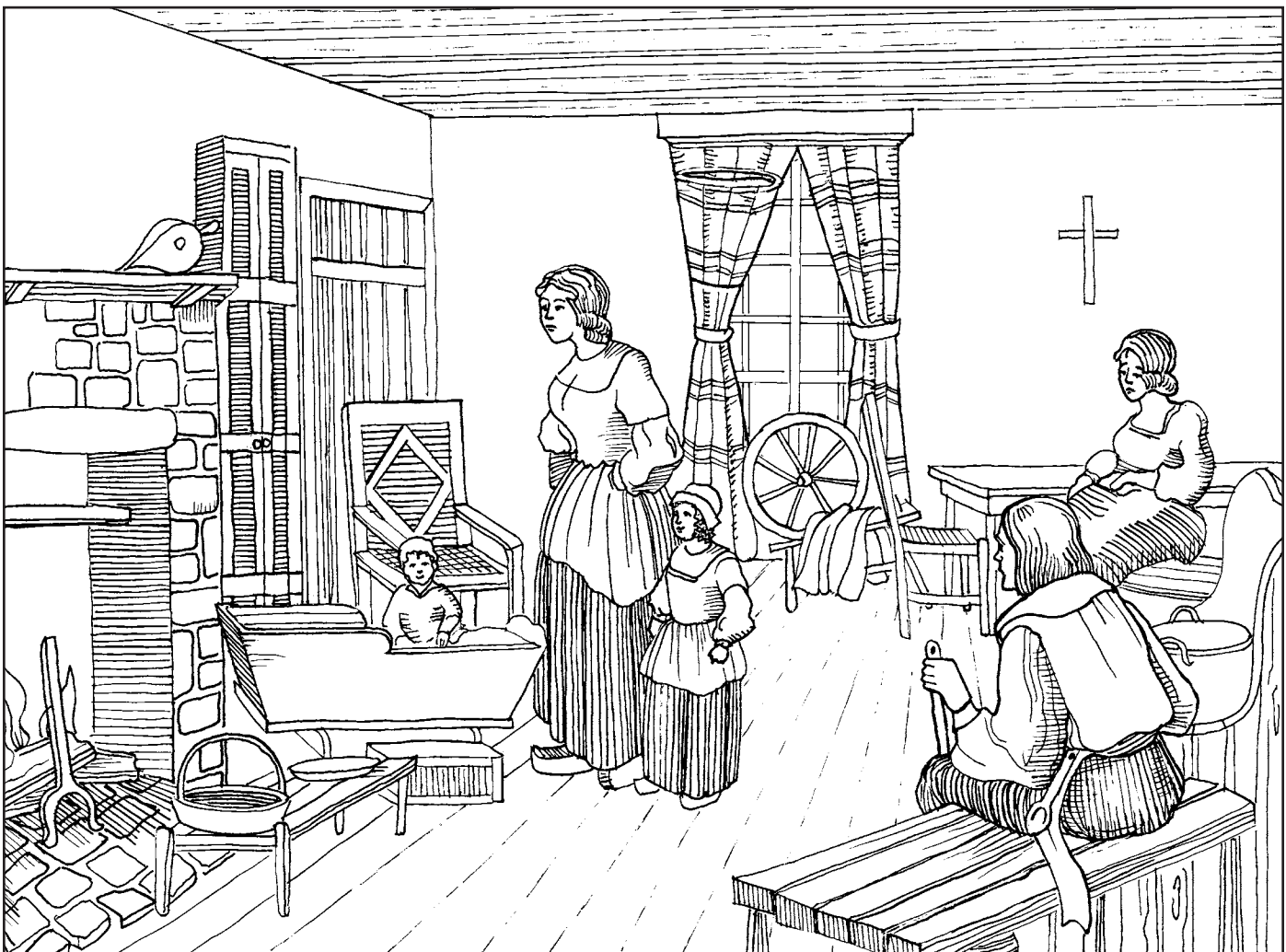
Settlers in New France

Inside a Habitant's Home

In the largest room of the habitant's home stood the fireplace. The fireplace was used for both cooking and heating. Because the fireplace was the only source of heat, this room was used for eating, sitting and even sleeping. The walls were covered with plaster, then whitewashed. The floor was made of pine boards. Sometimes in winter, a woven rug was placed on the floor for warmth.

The habitant made his own furniture using hand tools. In the picture is a table, chairs, a buffet for storing dishes, a cradle and a bench bed. They were made of wood, then painted with homemade paint. Some of the bowls and buckets were also made of wood.

Can you find a cooking pot, a stirring spoon and a bucket hidden in the picture?



Settlers in New France