

Pontiac's War, 1763-1766

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ABSTRAKT

Po vítězství Británie ve Francouzsko-indiánské válce a podepsání Pařížské smlouvy v roce 1763 se Britové zmocnili území ve východní Kanadě a na horním Středozápadě. Během války se někteří Indiáni postavili na stranu Francouzů a někteří na stranu Angličanů, ale žádná strana nebyla spokojena s výsledky Pařížské smlouvy. Indiáni, s nimiž Angličané zacházeli jako s druhotnými občany, se začali bouřit. Ottawům, pod vedením náčelníka Pontiac, se podařilo zajmout osm Britských pevností díky pomoci dalších kmenů. To poskytlo Pontiacovi možnost k vyjednávání s Angličany o jejich domorodých právech, což se mu podařilo úspěšně v červenci 1766. V důsledku těchto jednání si Britové ponechali své země, ale Indiáni alespoň na chvíli dosáhli větší autonomie.

Klíčová slova: Pontiacova válka, Pontiac, Francouzi, Britové, Indiáni, Ottawové, pohraničí, Pařížská smlouva, Francouzsko-indiánská válka, Sedmiletá válka.

ABSTRACT

After Britain won the French and Indian War and signed the Treaty of Paris in 1763, they took possession of eastern Canada and the upper Midwest. During the war, some Indians had sided with the French, and some with the British, but none were happy with the outcomes of the Treaty of Paris. Treated as second-class citizens by the British, Indians started to rebel. The Ottawa Indians, led by the war chief Pontiac and with the support of other tribes, were able to capture eight British forts. This gave Pontiac the leverage he needed to successfully negotiate with the British in July 1766 over their Native American policies. As a result of these negotiations, the British kept their lands, but the Indians did achieve greater autonomy, at least for a while.

Keywords: Pontiac's War, Pontiac, French, British, Indians, Ottawa, Frontier, Treaty of Paris, French and Indian War, Seven Years' War.

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INTRODUCTION

By the end of the French and Indian War in 1763, the British national debt had almost doubled because of the military expenses needed to win the war. Further fighting would mean increased debts, which had to be avoided at all costs. When Pontiac's War began in 1763, British military expenses again rose, and continued to increase as the war progressed. The need to curtail expenses brought the British to the negotiating table. Diplomacy ended the war, to the benefit of both the British and their Indian adversaries.

This thesis begins by documenting the British and French colonization efforts in North America, including their relationship with the Native Americans, who accepted the French as their “brothers” and allowed them to live among them. It then deals with the British and French competition over the land, in which the Native Americans were caught in the middle. This competition led to the French and Indian War, during which the Native Americans were forced to choose sides. The British victory in the war not only led to the expulsion of the French from the northeastern section of North America but to the poor treatment of the Indians by the British. The Indians were dissatisfied because they were not given any rights to negotiate with the British about the consequences of the war. The British adjusted their Indian policies, which differed from the accustomed French policies. This led to a bloody conflict between the British and Indians, known as Pontiac’s War. Ottawa chief Pontiac united various tribes across North America in an effort to drive the British off their lands and restore Indian sovereignty. The war lasted for three years, during which the Indians were successful enough to bring the British to the negotiating table. In 1766, the war ended with a peace deal that included adjustments in the British Indian policy in relation to gift-giving, trade, land rights, and hunting territories. Even though Indians did not drive the British off their lands, they actually won by forcing the British to change their Indian policies.

1 ESTABLISHING RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE INDIANS

Trade between the Europeans and the North American Indians began in the sixteenth century. The first items that were traded to Indians were colored glass beads and copper trinkets. Initially, they did not accept European clothing and tools, preferring items that could be used in their religious practices and rituals. As time passed, however, Indians noticed the practical utilization of European goods and started to trade for clothing, firearms, and ammunition. Indians demanded that their customs of drinking, eating, and gift-giving were performed before the trade negotiations. With this demand met, Indians became dependent on European goods.¹

1.1 The military relationship between the French and Indians

Samuel de Champlain established the first permanent settlement in Quebec in 1608. Some of the native tribes sided with the French since the founding of Quebec. This meant for the French that they had to make alliances with some tribes and fight against others. The French were ready to help their allies against the Iroquois Confederacy, who wanted to conquer Eastern North America. They made alliances with many tribes e.g., Ottawa, Ojibwa, Potawatomi, and Algonquian-speaking peoples. This was a smart decision by the French because fighting against an enemy such as the Iroquois Confederacy could prove fatal. The Iroquois Confederacy, also called the Five Nations (after 1722, the Six Nations) was an alliance of the Mohawk, Onondaga, Oneida, Cayuga, and Seneca (and later, the Tuscarora).²

1.2 The economic relationship between the French and Indians

The French were not only good for military purposes; they were also good trading partners. The European markets were interested in fur, so the French established a good trading relationship with the Indians. The most common trade item was beaver pelts from the upper St. Lawrence Valley and Great Lakes region. In exchange for these pelts, the Algonquian people traded for many European goods, mainly firearms, ammunition, iron tools, and utensils. Furthermore, European clothing was desired for its comfort. As Indians grew accustomed to European goods, they began to need them.³

¹ Philip Joseph Deloria, and Neal Salisbury, *A Companion to American Indian History* (Chichester: Blackwell, 2011), 39.

² Richard Middleton, *Pontiac's War: Its Causes, Course and Consequences* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 1.

³ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 2.

1.3 French expansion

In 1701, the French made peace with the Iroquois, which paved the way for regional expansion. That same year, Detroit was founded as a new trading post for fur. Detroit was guarded by a small garrison whose job was to intimidate the British and protect the French and Indian traders. The expanding fur trade in Fort Detroit attracted more Indian traders.⁴ In 1715, the Michilimackinac fort was built at the northern side of Lakes Michigan, and Huron. The French wanted to connect Canada and Fort Chartres, so they built the Miami and Ouiatanon forts in 1719. The purpose of those forts was to protect the communication between the Maumee and Wabash Rivers. In 1721, the Niagara fort was built, and its presence meant protection for the French trade.⁵

1.3.1 French forts

The purpose of the French posts was to intimidate other European countries and to establish safe trading places for the Indians and French. These posts were built more as trade centers than as actual forts, so the protection they provided was more symbolic than actual. Most forts had a little-to-no garrison at all, with 10 men being the maximum. The only post that was built of stone and had more men was Fort de Chartres on the Mississippi River (present-day Illinois).

Each post was assigned an interpreter to communicate with the Indians and a smith to repair broken tools or weapons. Due to the lack of women, French men married Indian women, and their bilingual offspring were often used as interpreters. Although most of the trading taking place at these forts was fair, some French traders and officials were known to deceive Indian traders. Such deceitful behavior, when uncovered, was punishable by death.⁶ Many Indians lived in the vicinity of the French posts, and the French encouraged this. Fort Detroit especially had a large Indian population outside its palisade. In this way, the French and Indians often came in close contact and, over time, became trusting allies. The French further improved this relationship through gift-giving, which the Indians saw as a sign of respect.⁷

⁴ Liz Sonneborn, *Chronology of American Indian History* (New York: Facts on File, 2009), 77.

⁵ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 3.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁷ *Ibid.*

1.4 The increasing conflict

The French started King George's War in 1744 when they attacked a British village in the Fort Louisbourg area (Cape Breton, Canada). In response, the British attacked and captured Fort Louisbourg in 1745. Afterward, the French and British, both supported by Indian allies, raided and plundered each other.⁸ As a result of the conflict, the French suffered supply shortages and were forced to reduce their gift-giving to their Indian allies. The Indians grew angry, but when the war ended in 1748 and gifts reappeared, they were appeased.⁹

In 1753, the French expanded into the Ohio River Valley and constructed new forts there. In doing so, the French encroached not only on the Iroquois Confederacy but on the British colony of Virginia. In response, Virginia sent George Washington to negotiate. Washington demanded that the French stop building forts and abandon the valley. The French rejected this demand and continued with fort construction. In response, Washington gathered the Virginia militia, which proceeded to build its own forts in the Ohio River Valley.¹⁰ War came when Washington's militia and its Indian allies discovered, attacked, and defeated 34 French soldiers at Great Meadows.¹¹ Soon after, Washington and his 150 soldiers were forced to return to Fort Necessity. The following Battle of Fort Necessity was fought on 3 July 1754 between troops commanded by the French captain Louis Coulon de Villiers and Washington. Washington and his militia surrendered to the French and were released soon after. This was the only time that Washington surrendered.¹²

⁸ Sonneborn, *Chronology of American Indian History*, 84.

⁹ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 4.

¹⁰ Sonneborn, *Chronology of American Indian History*, 86.

¹¹ John M. Murrin, et al., *Liberty, Equality, Power: A History of the American People* (Boston: Cengage Learning, 2019), 137.

¹² Tony Jaques, *Dictionary of Battles and Sieges: A Guide to 8,500 Battles from Antiquity through the Twenty-First Century* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2007), 365.

2 THE FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR

The French and Indian War (1754-63) was a war between France, Britain, and the Indians. Most of the Indian tribes who got involved in the war fought on the French side, but a few tribes fought on the side of the British.¹³ As the war raged on in North America, Britain decided to declare war on France in 1756, starting the Seven Years War (1757-63), in which France, Austria, and Russia fought against Britain and Prussia. For most of the duration, Spain remained neutral, a decision which helped Britain.¹⁴ Despite the help of Indian tribes, the French lost the war. Britain's victory had a negative impact on the French and eastern Indians, for they had to relinquish their lands to the British.¹⁵ Indians were furious about this, in part because they realized that the British would now settle in the Ohio River Valley in large numbers.¹⁶ The native relationship with the French was harmonious, in large part due to gift-giving on the part of the French. However, the British did not engage in such practices, which led the Indians to become angry and to attack British forts. Such attacks are now known as Pontiac's War.¹⁷

2.1 The vital link

In the early 1750s, while the British were creating new settlements, the French were afraid of them encroaching on the Ohio River Valley. The French knew that if the British continued to expand into the upper Ohio region, they would eventually cut off the essential connection between Canada and Louisiana. Before this realization, the French were not interested in the Ohio region, but because of British expansion, this place became a vital strategic region for the French. Indian settlers in the upper Ohio region were warned by the French about the British. They convinced them that the British wanted to take their lands and enslave them, while the French wanted to live with them in a harmony.¹⁸ The French knew that if they lost control over the Ohio Valley region, British settlers would soon inhabit it. The only way out for the French was to secure the Ohio Valley. In 1753, they started to build forts to gain control over their lands. The fort building antagonized the British, who tried to stop them from doing so.

¹³ Sonneborn, *Chronology of American Indian History*, 58.

¹⁴ Murrin et al., *Liberty, Equality, Power*, 142.

¹⁵ Sonneborn, *Chronology of American Indian History*, 58.

¹⁶ Keith R. Widder, *Beyond Pontiac's Shadow: Michilimackinac and the Anglo-Indian War of 1763* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2013), 24.

¹⁷ Sonneborn, *Chronology of American Indian History*, 58.

¹⁸ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 5.

2.2 Congress at Albany

At the beginning of 1754, New France and Britain did not expect such a massive war to break out over Ohio Valley control. The British were afraid that the Six Nations would side with New France. This fear forced them to hold a congress at Albany, New York in 1754. Seven representatives from British colonies and Iroquois chiefs attended the Albany Congress in order to prepare for war with the French and to persuade the Iroquois to join the side of the British.¹⁹

In the same year, Benjamin Franklin suggested a plan for uniting the northern colonies, by which a “President General” would enforce the laws. Franklins’ plan was unanimously rejected by the colonies.²⁰

2.3 The temporary victory of the French

As the British tried to resolve the problem politically in Albany, Washington’s surrender at Fort Necessity caused, the Crown to send professionally trained fighters (redcoats), led by Edward Braddock, to aid the British against New France. Braddock’s objective was to recover lost territories and conquer French forts. This aggressive move caught the French off guard; they were unprepared to fight Braddock. Their only option was to ask their Indian allies for help.²¹ Indians readily responded to the invitation of the French government and gathered at Fort Duquesne in the Ohio territory. When the British forces attacked the fort on 14 September 1758, the combined French and Indian force was ready for them. The British were repulsed with heavy losses, including General Braddock and over 900 of his men. This victory was important to the French as it cemented their relationship with the Indians, especially the Delaware, who had lost their lands to the British through the deceitful Walking Purchase Treaty of 1737, which had forced their move into the Ohio Valley.²² Likewise, the Shawnee sided with the French after the British expansion into what came to be known as Pennsylvania. While the Iroquois, having been successfully wooed in Albany, sided with the British.

In 1757, the French attacked Fort William Henry and massacred over three hundred British soldiers.²³ The French were successful in battling the British, however, the Indian way of war differed from the European one. Indians wanted to kill the British who

¹⁹ Sonneborn, *Chronology of American Indian History*, 86.

²⁰ Murrin et al., *Liberty, Equality, Power*, 139.

²¹ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 6.

²² *Ibid*, 7.

²³ *Ibid*, 8.

surrendered, but the French wanted to let them live. The Indian way of war involved killing and plundering, something to which whites could not relate. Indians felt betrayed by the French because of the terms of capitulation and started to rebel.²⁴ More problems occurred when the French supplies were reduced by a successful British naval blockade. As hardship and want increased, their alliance began to deteriorate. The well-supplied British now started to attract Indians' attention.

In 1758, the British invited the Delaware and other Indians from the Ohio territory to negotiate. The results of the negotiation unsurprisingly favored the British, who convinced Ohio Valley Indians to abandon their French allies in exchange for land.²⁵ The French abandoned and destroyed Fort Duquesne the same year as a result of their weakened friendship with Indians living in the Ohio territory.²⁶ The British renamed Fort Duquesne to Pittsburgh and started to rebuild it. The British were now a smart choice for the Ohio River Valley Indians, as French military losses mounted. Even the Ottawa tribe was curious about siding with the British and asked the Delaware if the British wanted to live in peace with them. Then they found out that the British wanted them to cease further support of the French and return British prisoners. These demands made Indians afraid of British intentions about their autonomy.²⁷

2.4 The Cherokee uprising

In May 1755, the Cherokee of the Carolinas and Georgia chose representatives to negotiate a peace with the British. Both sides agreed to form an alliance. As a part of the deal, the British took possession of some Cherokee lands and were allowed to build a fort in Cherokee territory, while the Cherokee gained protection from the French and unfettered access to British trade goods.²⁸

In 1759, per their alliance, Cherokee warriors participated in the successful British attack on Fort Duquesne, after which, following custom, they gathered horses as spoils of war. Virginians disagreed with such looting, prompting a battle during which the Virginians killed 12 Cherokee and took their horses.²⁹ The Cherokee avenged this loss by killing about

²⁴ Colin G. Calloway, *First Peoples: A Documentary Survey of American Indian History* (New York: St. Martin's, 2018), 160.

²⁵ Sonneborn, *Chronology of American Indian History*, 89.

²⁶ Calloway, *First Peoples*, 160.

²⁷ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 10.

²⁸ Sonneborn, *Chronology of American Indian History*, 88.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 89.

20 Virginians. Due to this and past incidents, the Cherokee ceased further support of the British and started to plunder British settlements

In 1760, the British sent soldiers to South Carolina to stop the Cherokee attacks, but they failed.³⁰ In subsequent negotiations, the Cherokee agreed to leave the British alone but then quickly broke the agreement, prompting the British to send an even larger army to South Carolina to destroy the Cherokee spirit. During the next year, British soldiers killed many Cherokee and burned their homes. The Cherokee, seeing no other option, sued for peace and exited the conflict.³¹

2.5 The British victory

The war came to a turning point with the British conquest of Fort Niagara in 1759. The French were slowly starting to lose the support of the Indians, who increasingly preferred to stay neutral and observe the course of the war.

As the tide of war turned in favor of the British, Indians began to negotiate with them. In 1759, many negotiations took place mostly at Fort Pitt, about trade terms and prices of European goods. The Indian dependence on European goods gave the British the upper hand in the war as they knew that they could control the Indians with the supplies. As the British rebuilt forts and increased their presence in the Ohio territory, Indians grew increasingly fearful that the British might try to steal their land. The British alleviated these fears by stating that the forts were necessary to protect Indian lands against the French.³²

In 1759, The British captured Quebec. Then they captured Fort Levis on the St. Lawrence River, in August 1760.³³ After the conquest, Indian warriors were not allowed to enter the fort and plunder it. The Indians felt betrayed and began to consider the British as untrustworthy allies. With fort Levis in British hands, Montreal was left vulnerable. As an estimated 11,000 British soldiers converged on the city in a three-pronged attack, French soldiers, outnumbered more than five to one and out-supplied, took refuge within the city walls. The subsequent British siege of the city led to the surrender of the French forces in September, and to the end of the North American war. France would officially capitulate via the Treaty of Paris in 1763.³⁴

³⁰ Murrin et al., *Liberty, Equality, Power*, 147.

³¹ Sonneborn, *Chronology of American Indian History*, 90.

³² Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 12.

³³ *Ibid*, 13.

³⁴ Sonneborn, *Chronology of American Indian History*, 89.

2.6 Amherst's control of the Indian affair

With the fall of Montreal, the British gained great power. According to European protocols, General Jeffrey Amherst, the chief officer of the British North American colonies,³⁵ treated surrendered French settlers with respect. However, Indians living in Canada were not protected by those protocols and Amherst did not need to treat them like French settlers. Many white settlers, including Amherst, thought of Indians as second-class, good-for-nothings. Amherst's point of view did not change even after Indians helped him seize Montreal. For him, Indians were alcohol-addicted savages that were untrustworthy and needed to be controlled. For this reason, the British deemed supplying the Indians to be a waste of resources.³⁶

2.6.1 The market economy control

Before the fall of Montreal, the British were mostly cooperating with the Iroquois Six Nations, however, with the fall of Montreal, the British had to decide what to do with the Indians that were siding with the French. These Indians were e.g., Ottawa, Huron, Potawatomi, and Ojibwa of the Great Lakes; Delaware, Shawnee, and Mingo in the Ohio Valley; and the Kickapoo, Mascouten, Twightwee, and Piankashaw from the Maumee and Wabash Rivers.³⁷ Although they were on the side of the French, they did not consider themselves defeated. In their opinion, the French lost the war, but they remained undefeated. For them, it was the British whose turn it was to show them some respect as the French had done. The British, however, were of a different opinion, viewing the Indians as nothing more than vermin. And with the war over, the Indians' military purpose strongly declined.

The military expenditure on the French and Indian War was high, and now that the war was over, the Treasury in London assigned Amherst to cut any unnecessary cost.³⁸ The first target for Amherst was the Indian department. Before the fall of Montreal, the Indian department was established to help maintain and improve the friendship with the Indians. There were two supervisors, Sir William Johnson for the Ohio region and Edmund Atkins for the southern side of the Ohio River Valley. Amherst ordered Johnson, to dismiss all the officers working in his department as there was no longer any need for them. With the war over, Amherst also decided to reduce gift-giving to the Indians. Unlike Amherst, Johnson

³⁵ Sonneborn, *Chronology of American Indian History*, 49.

³⁶ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 18.

³⁷ Ibid, 19.

³⁸ Murrin et al., *Liberty, Equality, Power*, 152.

wanted to strengthen the friendship with the Indians and warned Amherst that his doings would upset them. In Amherst's view, Indians should be self-sufficient. Furthermore, he thought that Indians were just exploiting the kindness of the British. The only exceptions were made for the Six Nations and Indians at Fort Niagara and Fort Pitt. Soon after the new policy ending gift-giving, Indians lacked ammunition, guns, and food. Moreover, their numbers were decreasing due to the increased sickness and poverty.³⁹

Gift-giving was one of the most important customs for Indian chiefs, as they judged their respect by the number of goods received from the Europeans. Amherst's opinion did not change even though his officers knew that this sudden halt to gift-giving might result in rebellions and rising hostilities between the British and Indians. Johnson tried to negotiate with Amherst about supporting Indians with gifts as they were dependent on them, but Amherst did not want to adopt the French policy. In fact, Amherst deemed it unnecessary to give gifts to Indians to maintain their friendship.⁴⁰

2.6.2 Trade establishment

Amherst instead aimed to establish fair trade between the British and Indians.⁴¹ The French system of trade had worked well, and Johnson was particularly interested in implementing the same system, which prevented cheating on the Indians and still allowed for a 50 percent profit. Although Johnson wanted to establish fair trade, Amherst suspected him of a power grab and rejected his offer. Amherst instead ordered Johnson to find a suitable candidate for governor of Detroit.⁴²

The Six Nations received low-quality goods during the war. Johnson assured them that after the British won the war, they would establish fair trade, discuss their movements with them, and give them shelter, food, and medical help. However, the Six Nations were unsatisfied with the rising prices of British goods and increasingly felt exploited. Although Johnson was for fair trade and a good friendship with the Indians, he believed that the Six Nations were at fault for abandoning Fort Levis and fleeing from the battle, while still exploiting the British generosity. The Indians particularly complained about the quality of

³⁹ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 21.

⁴⁰ Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766* (New York: Vintage Books, 2001), 334

⁴¹ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac's Shadow*, 97.

⁴² Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 22.

the gunpowder provided to them by the British, so the British responded by cutting off their supply.⁴³ When the Indians ran out of gunpowder, they begged the British for more.⁴⁴

Amherst thought he could control the Indians through the gunpowder supply, but he was wrong, for the Indians simply returned to using bows and arrows. Thus, the alliance between the British and Indians weakened. Furthermore, the Indians started to think that the British wanted to decrease their numbers and drive them off their land. In 1761, Johnson assured the Cayuga and Onondaga representatives that the British had no such plans. Johnson knew that with the upcoming Detroit conference, he had to persuade the Indians of the good intentions of the British, despite the gunpowder supply issue.⁴⁵

2.6.3 The British control of French forts

The French surrender made their forts British property. Such forts were important for the control of the former French territories. In the time of war, Amherst's decision to inhabit these forts for military purposes enraged Indians who wanted to use these forts as trading posts. Mainly the Shawnee and Delaware tribes threatened the British that if they proceeded to occupy the former French forts, they would become their enemies. Under the pressure of these threats, the British officers assured the Indians that the British needed to occupy the forts to protect free trade. Amherst even offered that he would share the cornfields with the Indians and abandon the forts after the French final defeat. These offers worked, allowing the British to take over the French forts and control the region.⁴⁶ However, some forts like Fort Pitt and Fort Niagara were being reconstructed for military purposes, and rumors started to spread among the Indians that the British were building forts to drive them off their lands.⁴⁷ The British strengthened these rumors by building new settlements around the forts, thereby increasing Indian fears and anger. Furthermore, Indians were banned from entering some of the British forts. Such actions resulted in many incidences of violence.⁴⁸

2.6.4 British expansion over Indian lands

In the time of the French and Indian War, Indians were promised that their lands would not be taken from them. Although Amherst assured them that no British man will step on their lands or even use them for hunting, the Ohio Company wanted to expand further into Indian

⁴³ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 23.

⁴⁴ Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 337

⁴⁵ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 24.

⁴⁶ Ibid, 25.

⁴⁷ Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 347.

⁴⁸ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 27.

territory. This meant more white settlers would come, who would eventually become independent of the need to trade with Indians.⁴⁹ The British were expanding with their patents, which were negotiated at the beginning of the eighteenth century. In 1761, the settlements that attracted many whites were Fort Pitt, New York, and Connecticut. In New York, three patents allowed the British legal rights to Indian land, especially to Mohawk land. And then the Susquehanna Company was established to oversee lands in Pennsylvania.⁵⁰ Such expansion angered the Six Nations.⁵¹

2.6.5 The British captives

During the French and Indian War, many British men, women, and even children were held captive. After the French surrendered, prisoners on both sides should have been exchanged, per European custom. However, Indian customs differed. Some people captured by Indians were traded for guns and ammunition. Men were often sacrificed for ritual purposes, and women with children were distributed into families of fallen Indians. Ultimately, some captives that lived in Indian families did not want to return to British settlements. Although they resisted, British officers could not believe that prisoners of Indians did not want to return to white society. They believed that Indians made them betray Christianity by turning them into heathens.

Not to further damage the friendship between the British and Indians, many Indians from the Ohio River Valley returned their prisoners to the British.⁵² Despite such efforts, British authorities were dissatisfied with the large number of British captives who chose to remain among the Indians. When negotiations were unsuccessful, the British threatened the Indians with total war.⁵³ These threats enraged the Indians, including the Six Nations, who were increasingly afraid of the growing power of the British. Such threats, combined with the gunpowder withholding, the end of gift-giving, the British fort control, and bad trade terms for Indians severely damaged the Indian trust in the British.

2.7 Increasing tensions

The British were certain of peace with Indians from the Great Lakes after signing the peace treaty, and with the control over the former French forts, they secured their place in the

⁴⁹ Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 348.

⁵⁰ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 28.

⁵¹ Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 348.

⁵² Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 31.

⁵³ Jeffrey Ostler, *Surviving Genocide: Native Nations and the United States from the American Revolution to Bleeding Kansas* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019), 43.

eastern part of North America. With the conquest of Canada, Johnson wanted to implement his new trade policies.⁵⁴ However, Amherst rejected his suggestions. Although Johnson's plan was rejected by Amherst, he was sure that it would be approved by the British ministry. Although the dissatisfaction of the Indians was increasing, the British believed that Indians were the ones who should change their policies. The budget meant no gift-giving, and Thomas Hutchins, the commanding officer of Fort Pitt, followed orders. In 1762, Fort Pitt was visited by a group of Six Nations warriors who were in need of ammunition and guns. Their request was outright rejected at first, but Hutchins ultimately gave them enough to placate them.⁵⁵

In the spring of 1762, Hutchins visited many of the western Indians who were allied with the British. He found them poor and sick, and thus unable to hunt, making them dependent on British gifts. Although Johnson, as a symbolic gesture, was sending them some gifts, they were insufficient. Hutchins was repeatedly told by Indian chiefs that the French were better. Furthermore, Amherst prohibited British traders from selling rum and ammunition to the Indians. This angered the Indians and made them all the more convinced that the British wanted to reduce the Indian population so that they could steal their lands.⁵⁶ Amherst thus became afraid that the Indians would again turn to the French and Spanish for aid.⁵⁷ This fear increased as rumors spread about French and Spanish designs on Quebec. To worsen matters, British traders, seeing the weakness of the Indians, began taking advantage of them, which in turn made the Indians increasingly hostile and uncooperative.⁵⁸

In the same year, The British invited the Six Nations, Great Lakes Indians, and Ohio River Valley Indians to a conference at Lancaster. Although Indians returned 18 prisoners, British officers were surprised that they brought such a small number. However, Indians wanted something in return for giving up their prisoners. Many captives from the Ohio Indians were sent to Seneca, who kept them as insurance against the British. George III, King of Great Britain, insisted on returning white prisoners, for he believed that Indians made slaves of them. The Lancaster conference was unsuccessful in persuading Indians to return all of the European prisoners. All of the present Indians did not like the outcome of negotiations and were left with thoughts of discontent. Indians did not want to give up on their adopted family members. However, the British ignored the fact that some white

⁵⁴ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 47.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 48.

⁵⁶ Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 349.

⁵⁷ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 50.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 52.

captives wanted to stay with their new Indian families, and accused Indians of trying to change terms to their interests. Thus, Johnson's department decided to force Indians to return their captives quicker by assigning Alexander McKee to persuade Shawnee Indians to surrender their captives. He made Indians return few captives but failed in persuading them to speed up the process. Indians' excuse was that they could not gather because of the spreading illness. However, Indians were trying to slow down the process of returning white captives intentionally. Indians believed that after the return of white people, the British would attack them and try to take over their lands. Their opinion was supported by the establishment of the Forbes and Braddock roads which connected Winchester with Fort Pitt. The British assured Indians that they would not expand to their lands further as stated in the Treaty of Easton. This treaty prohibited the British to settle in the Indian hunting grounds. Although it was forbidden to settle on the Indian lands, some of the British settlers ignored this proclamation. This behavior increased the distrust between the British and Indians even more. Some Indians were turning into enemies of the British and were ready to protect their land in case of further British expansion.⁵⁹ Susquehanna Company was an example of such disrespect towards Indians. Although this company received a warning from Amherst and Johnson, it still proceeded with the expansion deeper in the Indian lands. During the process, Teedyuscung, chief of Delaware, was killed by the anonymous arsonist who burned down his cabin and village.⁶⁰ Delaware knew that it was all doings of the British, who wanted to steal their land. Furthermore, the company started to build settlements on the ground of the burned Delaware village. This act showed great disrespect to Teedyuscung's death and the Indians.⁶¹

2.7.1 War preparations

In 1761, Seneca sent a message about retaking all the former French forts to all Indians who sided with the French. One year later, the British found out about the message and began investigating. Louis Billouart de Kerlérec, Governor of Louisiana, with Spain on his side, started to prepare for the fulfillment of this message. After the fall of Canada, the rest of the French settled in the lower Mississippi River Valley. Kerlérec wanted to side with Indians living in this region as they could protect the French from the British. His main goal was to convince the Alabama, Choctaw, Creek, and Cherokee Indians to join his side. After supplies

⁵⁹ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 56.

⁶⁰ Sonneborn, *Chronology of American Indian History*, 91.

⁶¹ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 57.

sent by the French ministry arrived at New Orleans, Kerlérec sent a message to the Northern Indians that they are preparing for a war. Kerlérec assigned Monsieur de Lantagnac, his official, to deliver this message to the Indians. Lantagnac visited the Shawnee and Delaware, who accepted his offer, but he did not dare to visit the rest of the Six Nations as he was not sure of their friendliness.⁶² Kerlérec approached Seneca who joined the French because of the alliance with the Delaware and Shawnee. The next step was to convince the Great Lakes Indians to join them. With the help of Delaware, Kerlérec set up a conference near the Ottawa village and invited chiefs of Great Lakes Indians, mainly of Ottawa, Ojibwa, Wyandot, Potawatomie. The result of the conference did not please the French as they thought. Indians of the Great Lakes shared the opinion that they did not want to provoke the British when they were at peace with them at the moment. However, they would watch the British and be prepared in case of an attack.⁶³

Later on, the British found out about the conference where the French were trying to persuade Indians to join their side to drive the British off their lands. The proof that the French are plotting revenge was showed by the Miami (Indians of the Great Lakes), who leaked the discussion between the French and Indians of the Great Lakes. With this information in hand, George Croghan, Johnson's deputy responsible for Indian affairs, invited the Delaware, Shawnee, and Seneca to Fort Pitt in December. They confessed to Croghan that they attended such conference, but it was because of the intention to defend themselves from the British. They argued that the British were holding the ammunition and the only thing stopping them from destroying Indians was their captives. Although the Seneca initially failed, they were still trying to persuade other Indians to join them in battle against the British.⁶⁴ Croghan shared his information about the Indian conference with Amherst, but he believed that Indians cannot attack them as they are not united. Furthermore, Indians who settled near the British posts were acting peacefully. For Amherst, there was no sign of the Indian uprising, thus he overlooked the Indian doings. The British were underestimating Indian power which resulted in severe consequences.⁶⁵

⁶² Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 58.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 61.

⁶⁵ Francis Parkman, *The Conspiracy of Pontiac and the Indian War after the Conquest of Canada* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012), 71.

2.7.2 Religious causes

New British laws which greatly influenced the lives of Indians were not the only ones that led to a distrust of the British. Their religious customs started to crumble since the first connections with Europeans. This all was meant to change with the appearance of Neolin in 1761. Neolin was a Delaware prophet, whose vision of the world without whites set many Indians against the British. In his vision, Neolin saw what led to such fate of Indians because of the British, and what needed to be done to atone for their sins. Neolin urged Indians to separate themselves from British customs, and recover their traditions, otherwise, their gods would doom their people and punish them in the afterlife.⁶⁶ This meant a restoration of their customs before the arrival of Europeans and an absolute disconnection from the British. In his vision, Indians would become independent once more, and live their lives in freedom. Neolin's vision spread to the Indians living in the Ohio region and the Great Lakes.⁶⁷ His message influenced mainly the Ottawa chief, Pontiac, who spread the message to Potawatomi, Odawa, Ojibway and Wyandot, and asked them for help against the destroyers of their lands, the British.⁶⁸ Pontiac expressed his love towards the French, for whom Great Lakes Indians were long old-time allies, and accused the British of stealing their lands and destroying their nation. There was only one thing Pontiac could do, and that was to drive the British off their lands.⁶⁹

2.8 The end of the French and Indian War

The French and Indian War ended in spring, after nine years by the Treaty of Paris of 1763. The British won and acquired most of the French territory from the East of the Mississippi River to the Atlantic Ocean. The treaty did not include New Orleans for it was given to Spain in 1762. Indians were stunned by the outcome of the war. Furthermore, they could not believe that the French gave their lands to the British without consulting it with them. In their view, they were not on the losing side and had an equal position among the French and the British.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 62

⁶⁷ Sonneborn, *Chronology of American Indian History*, 90.

⁶⁸ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac's Shadow*, 99.

⁶⁹ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 64.

⁷⁰ Calloway, *First Peoples*, 161.

3 PONTIAC'S WAR

British treaties of 1762 and 1763, together with the end of the French and Indian War, gave the British most of the French and Indian lands. New policies, broken treaties, and British behavior shocked and enraged many Indians who united and took over many British forts with the aim to drive them off their lands. This period of violent conflicts is known as Pontiac's War.⁷¹

Since the French and Indian war began, Indians were fighting for a place among the British, French, and Spain. Although the British won the war, the French won Indian hearts with a harmonious and prosperous friendship. However, the British did not adopt the friendly customs of the French. Furthermore, they forbid gift-giving and adjusted trading policies which resulted in famine and poorness. These acts of hostility and ignorance alarmed Indians about the British intentions.⁷² Once again, Indians united and called their French allies to the battle against the British. During the war, British soldiers were given orders to pillage Indian villages and their people, however, the British did not burn almost any village at all. 13 British forts were under attack of Pontiac and his allies. The only forts that Pontiac could not conquer were Fort Niagara, Fort Detroit, and Fort Pitt. Pontiac was trying to take over the control of these forts for several months but without a success. The British used an epidemic of smallpox as a weapon to decrease and weaken the numbers of Indians. The British unofficially won the war in 1764 and ordered Indians to return their captives, but the war officially ended in 1766 by the peace treaty. However, the British learned the hard way that Indians are dangerous enemies if provoked. Thus, the British adjusted policies regarding gift-giving, land, and trade as Indians originally wanted.⁷³

3.1 Pontiac

Almost nothing was known about Pontiac until 1763 when he played a key role in Pontiac's War. Pontiac was an Ottawa chief, who had a great influence over the Ojibwa, Ottawa, and Pottawattamie because he was raised in a family of Ottawa Chief and Ojibwa mother.⁷⁴ This mixed parentage gave Pontiac power over the Great Lake Indians and it made him one of the scariest enemies for the British.⁷⁵ However, being a child of the Ottawa chief did not

⁷¹ Deloria and Salisbury, *A Companion to American Indian History*, 61.

⁷² Philip S. Haffenden, *The English Historical Review* 120, no. 487 (2005): 787. Accessed April 6, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3489428>.

⁷³ Murrin et al., *Liberty, Equality, Power*, 155.

⁷⁴ Parkman, *The Conspiracy of Pontiac and the Indian War after the Conquest of Canada*, 69.

⁷⁵ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 65.

give Pontiac respect and power. It was his devotion, courage, spirit, and energy of a chief. Furthermore, his figure was different from other Indians. He was taller than others and more muscular with tattoos all over his body. These aspects themselves made him well-respected among Indians.⁷⁶

Since the beginning, Pontiac sided with the French and fought against the British in the French and Indian War. It is believed that he led Ottawas in the fight of Fort Duquesne, which led to the death of Braddock.⁷⁷ His support to the French made Great Lakes Indians trustworthy allies to the New France and feared enemy to the British. Furthermore, Pontiac accused the British of lying when they promised Great Lakes Indians gifts and rum, but they did not fulfill their promise. Amherst's policy enraged many Indians, including Pontiac, who started the rebellion.⁷⁸

3.2 The beginning of the war

Pontiac invited all the Great Lakes Indians to the council in April where he discussed the death of Teedyuscung, support of Delaware, and attack plan on Detroit. Few days after the council ended, Pontiac visited Fort Detroit with forty Indians who mapped the layout of the fort. Gladwin, commander at Detroit, and his men were watching the Indians who performed their dances, completely unaware of Indians who mapped the fort. This helped Pontiac to complete his scheme of attack, and he presented it at another council at the beginning of May. He planned to persuade Gladwin to negotiate with him while 300 Indians would enter the fort with concealed weapons.⁷⁹ Before Pontiac could implement his plan, Great Lakes Indian came to Gladwin and warned him before Pontiac and his plan. After hearing Pontiac's plan, Gladwin immediately strengthened the guard of Detroit. Pontiac and his men arrived at Fort Detroit the next day as Gladwin expected. To Pontiac's surprise, the fort was heavily guarded by the British soldiers who were ready to attack. Although Pontiac was shocked, he expressed his wonderment about the armed soldiers. Pontiac realized that he was betrayed and decided to not sacrifice lives of his people, and left the fort without a battle.⁸⁰ This decision put him in a difficult situation. His men were ready to fight the British and argued

⁷⁶ James H. Marsh, "Obwandiyag (Pontiac): Warrior Chief," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, accessed April 7, 2021. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/pontiacs-war-feature>

⁷⁷ Hale C. Sipe, *The Indian Wars of Pennsylvania: An Account of the Indian Events, in Pennsylvania, of the French and Indian War* (Westminster: Heritage Books, 2005), 412.

⁷⁸ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 65.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 67.

⁸⁰ Kirk Munroe, *At War with Pontiac, or, The Totem of the Bear: A Tale of Redcoat and Redskin* (Montana: Kessinger, 2004), 65.

that they should have tried to take over the fort while they were close to the British officers.⁸¹ To isolate the British, Pontiac and his warriors settled near the fort. On 6 May, Pontiac and his warriors attacked the fort and killed unaware soldiers and settlers. The siege continued the following day with hours of Indian firing on the fort and ship entrance.⁸² After several hours of fighting, Pontiac sent few Indians to propose a conference where they would discuss peace terms. Gladwin did not believe Pontiac and his peace, but he also knew that their supplies would disappear in two weeks. On 9 May, Pontiac sent his messengers to inform other tribes that he started the battle with the British and that he commands everyone to follow his actions.⁸³ On 10 May, Gladwin sent his two officers, Donald Campbell and Lieutenant George McDougall, accompanied by French settlers to negotiate with the Indians. To no surprise, Pontiac demanded the surrender of the British and their withdrawal back to the East. Furthermore, he captured Campbell and McDougall for the following persuasion.⁸⁴ On 11 May, Pontiac sent another small group with peace terms to Gladwin, who was not willing to cooperate unless they return his officers. Gladwin's rejection of peace terms set off another wave of Indian shooting, but with a little effect on the British. Houses and barns close to the fort were used as sniping spots for Indians. Gladwin was aware of this advantage and sent a small group of British soldiers to burn them down. Without these spots, Indians were not able to maintain long-distance battles which led to a decline in fighting.⁸⁵

Pontiac knew that defenses of the Fort Detroit were strong, so he aimed to cut off the connection of the fort with the Detroit River which was used for its supplying. Indians now controlled woods nearby the river which often led to an ambush of British supplies arriving at the fort. The next thing Pontiac wanted to do was to persuade French settlers to help Indians with building new covers for their snipers. However, the French wanted the Indians to make peace with the British without spilling any necessary blood.⁸⁶ The French proposal made Pontiac resend his peace terms to Gladwin. However, Gladwin was not afraid of Pontiac's threats and rejected his offer once more. Although new warriors came to help Pontiac, Gladwin did not see any reason to surrender. Furthermore, the fort was well supplied

⁸¹ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 69.

⁸² *Ibid*, 70.

⁸³ Thomas J. Maxwell, "Pontiac before 1763," *Ethnohistory* 4, no. 1 (1957): 43, doi: 10.2307/480635.

⁸⁴ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 71.

⁸⁵ *Ibid*, 72.

⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 75.

with support from Niagara, and they always could send help via Detroit River which he did at the ending of May.⁸⁷

Gladwin's message about the battles at Detroit arrived at Fort Niagara, thus the British officers sent Lieutenant Abraham Cuyler, who sailed to Fort Detroit with 96 soldiers and supplies. With the control of the woods, Pontiac found out about the British support and ambushed them on 28 May at Point Pelee. Almost 70 British soldiers were killed, some were taken captive and the rest escaped and sailed back to Niagara.⁸⁸

Meanwhile Pontiac and his allies besieged Detroit, Miami and Kickapoo took over Fort Miami and Fort Ouiatanon at the beginning of June. Furthermore, on 18 June, Ojibwa took over Michilimackinac, and Indians from Ohio valley were preparing for the battle over Fort Pitt.⁸⁹

On 23 June, another opportunity appeared for Pontiac to weaken the British morale by ambushing their boats. Although the situation was in Pontiac's favor, the British surprised him with soldiers hidden inside of the boats who rapidly repelled their attack. In the following days, Pontiac tried to persuade Gladwin to surrender Detroit, but he would not negotiate with Pontiac as long as Campbell and McDougall were imprisoned.⁹⁰ In the following days, McDougall escaped, but Campbell was tortured as an act of revenge for Ojibwa.⁹¹ When McDougall got to Gladwin, he explained that Pontiac sides with French inhabitants who show no respect to the British. Furthermore, Pontiac believed that if they weakened the British, the French King would join in the battle.⁹² The death of Campbell enraged Gladwin, who decided to destroy Ottawa's village which led Pontiac to build a new village further away from Detroit. Pontiac knew that if he wanted to take over Detroit, he had to separate the fort from the Detroit River and get more warriors from Delaware.⁹³

More help has been sent to Detroit which should have strengthened fort defenses and resupply British soldiers. 280 soldiers led by Captain James Dalyell planned to attack Pontiac and his settlement in the nighttime. However, with spies all over the woods, Pontiac and his allies found out about their position and ambushed them at Parent's Creek. Although Indians ambushed and killed 19 British soldiers with their captain, the rest of the British

⁸⁷ Parkman, *The Conspiracy of Pontiac and the Indian War after the Conquest of Canada*, 91.

⁸⁸ Jaques, *Dictionary of Battles and Sieges*, 805.

⁸⁹ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 77.

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 78.

⁹¹ *Ibid*, 80.

⁹² Evans Gregory Dowd, "The French King Wakes up in Detroit: "Pontiac's War" in Rumor and History." *Ethnohistory* 37, no. 3 (1990): 262, doi:10.2307/482446.

⁹³ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 81.

made it to the fort with sufficient amount of supplies. The place where the ambush happened is now known as Bloody Run.⁹⁴

In August, Ojibwa arrived at Detroit to support Pontiac with 200 warriors. This news were not genial to Gladwin, who struggled against a former army of Indians and was dependent on supply delivery. With the support of nearly 1000 warriors, Pontiac was ready to attack the fort. The opportunity to attack appeared on 3 September, when a few Mohawk sailed to Detroit to persuade Wyandot to not side with Pontiac. Right after they stepped on the ground, Pontiac and his warriors started to attack. Although his attack took the British and enemy Indians by surprise, Pontiac was not able to pass fort cannons. Gladwin was growing afraid of the increasing Indian forces and their control over the Detroit River. However, Pontiac lost many warriors during battles over Detroit and the siege did not go as he planned. Furthermore, some Indians set out to their hunting grounds in the upcoming winter.⁹⁵

On 3 October, Pontiac negotiated with Gladwin and they made a temporary peace based on Gladwin's promise that the British would not move further to the West.⁹⁶ On 14 October, Ojibwa negotiated with Gladwin about peace terms. The following days went in the same manner with more tribes joining the negotiations with the British.⁹⁷ Furthermore, the French arrived at Detroit with a message that their war with the British ended. Therefore, the King of France ordered all the Indians who side with the French to put down their weapons and stop the fighting. Pontiac accepted the proposal of the French King, but he made sure to make clear that both sides should overlook the past. At the beginning of November, Gladwin responded to Pontiac and other tribe leaders that Amherst is the one who could decide such matter.⁹⁸ Although Amherst was informed about the peace negotiations, he decided to hold the conference in spring when Indians will have no ammunition from their hunting season. Amherst wanted to have an upper hand in future negotiations, but Gladwin explained that they need to build a friendship with Indians and not to weaken their trust even more. After the negotiations with Gladwin, Pontiac and his warriors moved to the Maumee River where they spent the winter. Other tribes returned to their homes soon after Pontiac's departure.⁹⁹

⁹⁴ Jaques, *Dictionary of Battles and Sieges*, 146.

⁹⁵ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 124.

⁹⁶ Alan Axelrod, *In the Time of the Revolution: Living the War of American Independence* (Guilford: Lyons Press, 2020), 34.

⁹⁷ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 125.

⁹⁸ *Ibid*, 126.

⁹⁹ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 127.

3.3 The battle over Fort Pitt

Message of Pontiac besieging Fort Detroit spread among Delaware who were ready to support his cause. At the beginning of May 1763, Delaware started to prepare for the war; they moved their village further away from the British and traded their goods for ammunition as much as possible. When Delaware moved to safer location, they started to attack British settlements in the Ohio River Valley. On 29 May, former Colonel William Clapham was killed, and his settlement was destroyed.¹⁰⁰ In the following days, Delaware killed more British settlers and ordered their merchants to leave. The messages about Delaware hostilities got to Captain Ecuyer, who was preparing his men in Fort Pitt. Like in Detroit, nearby homes of settlers were burned down to preclude Indians from hiding.¹⁰¹

Although the initial attacks on the British, Delaware were not fully decided whether to attack the fort or remain in peace. Ultimately, the bloodlust of young warriors and the need to revenge the death of Teedyuscung led Delaware in the war against the British. On 22 June, first hostilities begun to occur as the Delaware and Shawnee attacked Fort Pitt. However, Ecuyer was prepared for the attack and ended their attempt with loaded cannons. Although the British easily repelled the Indian attack, they were worried about spreading smallpox in the fort. The first lost attempt for Delaware forced them to negotiate with McKee about peace terms.¹⁰² Although they did not reach a peace agreement, McKee gave Delaware and other Indians blankets as a gift. Little did they know that these blankets were taken from the smallpox victims.¹⁰³ During July, combined forces of Delaware and Shawnee raided British settlements and killed their inhabitants. However, smallpox spread among Delaware and Shawnee, which resulted in a severe decrease in their numbers.¹⁰⁴ With decreasing numbers of warriors, Delaware negotiated with Ecuyer about peace once more on 26 July. However, Ecuyer rejected their proposal which led to further fighting.¹⁰⁵

With the need for reinforcements, Colonel Henry Bouquet was sent to assist soldiers in Fort Pitt. On 5 August, Bouquet and his men marched towards Fort Pitt, but they were attacked close to Edge Hill by the Shawnee and Delaware. The ambush cost Bouquet many lives, but he did not withdraw. Furthermore, the next day Bouquet won the battle near the

¹⁰⁰ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 84.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, 85.

¹⁰² *Ibid*, 87.

¹⁰³ Calloway, *First Peoples*, 203.

¹⁰⁴ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 88.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 90.

Bushy Run which was an essential victory for the British as it contributed to the liberation of Fort Pitt.¹⁰⁶

3.4 The Proclamation Line

The Proclamation Line was published by the King of England in 1763, which separates the territories between the British settlers and Indian settlers.¹⁰⁷ The Proclamation line was meant to restrain further fighting between the British and Indians by setting an imaginary line along the Appalachian Mountains which forbade white settlers to purchase or settle in the Indian territory. Although the British government thought that the Proclamation Line would prevent further battles, it still could not prevent the conflict between the two sides. Indians' anger and British eagerness for western expansion led to many bloody conflicts.¹⁰⁸

The Proclamation Line was inconvenient especially to the British elite who bought Indian lands beyond the Appalachian Mountains. Among the ones who purchased these lands were Thomas Jefferson or George Washington, who served in the French and Indian War. All the purchased lands in the Indian territory were now at the mercy of the King of England, who was the only one that could negotiate with Indians about the sales of their lands.¹⁰⁹

3.5 The Paxton Boys

With the forts overtaken by Indians, British settlers who were not protected by their soldiers feared the progression of the war. In December 1763, a group of British men from Pennsylvania, who are now known as the Paxton Boys, attacked Conestoga village, and killed six Indians, not sparing even children.¹¹⁰ The rest of the Indians who survived the massacre managed to flee to Lancaster, where a British officer put them into jail for their protection. However, the Paxton Boys found out where the rest of the Indians were hiding and murdered them.¹¹¹ Although the felony, the Paxton Boys were not arrested for the mass murder, even though many British settlers were able to recognize the killers.¹¹²

¹⁰⁶ Jaques, *Dictionary of Battles and Sieges*, 177.

¹⁰⁷ Sonneborn, *Chronology of American Indian History*, 92.

¹⁰⁸ Calloway, *First Peoples*, 203.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid*, 205.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, 203.

¹¹¹ Clarissa W. Confer, *Daily Life During the Indian Wars* (Santa Barbara: Greenwood, 2011), 24.

¹¹² Sonneborn, *Chronology of American Indian History*, 92.

3.6 The diplomatic course of 1764

With the approaching spring in 1764, Indians of the Great Lakes were prepared to continue their fight for freedom. Ottawa's strategy was similar to the first one when Pontiac wanted to negotiate with Gladwin while his men would ambush the officers in the fort. Manitowby, the Ottawa chief, sent a message in which he called for help to Ojibwa who settled at Michilimackinac. Pontiac and his warriors prepared as well and set off to meet de Villiers at Fort Chartres. On 15 April, Pontiac finally met de Villiers at Fort Chartres where they discussed the course of the war. Pontiac requested help from de Villiers, but he rejected as the French King commanded his officers to spread peace not war.¹¹³ Pontiac was shocked when he heard that they should surrender and leave their lands to the British. De Villiers assured him that the French King did not give the British any of Indian lands but only of the French. When the meeting came to an end, Pontiac went to a nearby village inhabited by Illinois Indians where he sang a war song and drank rum with them. On 1 July, Pontiac was assured of Illinois support and set forth to Maumee River where his warriors awaited him.¹¹⁴

On 2 April, Thomas Gage, the new replacement for Amherst, assigned Colonel John Bradstreet with 2,000 soldiers which were meant to be used as an intimidating force for peace negotiations with Indians. Bradstreet's and Bouquet's mission was to spread messages about peace and invite Indians to the upcoming Niagara Conference.¹¹⁵

While Pontiac planned his strategies against the British, Johnson met Indians at a conference at Fort Niagara which took place on 12 July. Present Indians were a mixture of the Great Lakes and Ohio River Valley Indians. Johnson started the conference with an explanation of the misdoings of Indians, but he was ready to forgive those who join their side and give away names of those who wanted to start the war. The Ojibwa said that they received a war invitation, but they rejected it as they wanted peace. On 17 July, Johnson held another conference where he demanded the return of Fort Michilimackinac in order to continue the fair-trade which they had with them.¹¹⁶ Johnson also mentioned the promised return of their captives which has not been fulfilled yet. Johnson then negotiated with present tribes, some of them begged him to forgive them and let them trade with the British again. Wyandot, Seneca, eastern Delaware, and Indians settled near Michilimackinac accepted

¹¹³ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 146.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid*, 148.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid*, 149.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid*, 153.

Johnson's requirements. Although Pontiac did not arrive at the conference, Johnson considered it successful.¹¹⁷

The Shawnee, Delaware, and Mingo agreed to return their captives to Bouquet near the Muskingum River by 1 November. Bouquet received prisoners from the Delaware and Mingo, but not from Shawnee.¹¹⁸ On 9 November, representatives from the Delaware and Mingo discussed peace terms with Bouquet. The following day, the rest of their prisoners were returned to the British, and Delaware representatives were sent to Johnson.¹¹⁹ Now it was time for the Shawnee to return their captives and begin the peace negotiations with Bouquet.¹²⁰

On 12 November, Shawnee finally decided to meet Bouquet and discuss the given peace terms. To show that their intentions are friendly, Shawnee returned 36 prisoners and said that the rest will be given to them in the spring. Although Shawnee chief gave Bouquet a promise, he still demanded the rest of the prisoners to make real peace. On 13 November, Bouquet held another conference with the Shawnee representatives, who promised Bouquet to return all the remaining prisoners.¹²¹

3.7 The battle for Illinois

At the beginning of 1765, the British were marching towards hostile Mississippi River Indians. When Pontiac noticed what was going on, he gathered his warriors and set forth to support Illinois Indians. With the hope that the French will come to help, Pontiac planned to gather Mississippi River Indians and try to retake Fort Detroit.¹²²

While Pontiac was preparing for battle, Johnson ordered Croghan to meet Pontiac and spread the message of peace which they made with Delaware and Shawnee.¹²³ Croghan was a perfect fit for such mission as he had already met Pontiac and lived among the western Indians.¹²⁴ Furthermore, Pontiac was invited to Detroit to discuss peace. On 28 February, Croghan stopped at Fort Pitt to choose representatives of Delaware and Shawnee who would accompany him. While Croghan waited for the Delaware and Shawnee, Lieutenant Alexander Fraser, companion of Croghan, chose to set off without him. Croghan

¹¹⁷ Parkman, *The Conspiracy of Pontiac and the Indian War after the Conquest of Canada*, 191.

¹¹⁸ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 176.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid*, 178.

¹²⁰ Parkman, *The Conspiracy of Pontiac and the Indian War after the Conquest of Canada*, 209.

¹²¹ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 179.

¹²² *Ibid*, 187.

¹²³ Parkman, *The Conspiracy of Pontiac and the Indian War after the Conquest of Canada*, 225.

¹²⁴ *Ibid*, 226.

accompanied him with Indians from Seneca, Shawnee, and Wyandot.¹²⁵ On 17 April, Fraser arrived at Fort Chartres, where he delivered the message about peace and requested a talk with Illinois. Fraser announced the news the following day to the Illinois and Pontiac. When Fraser met Pontiac, he expressed his respect towards him and promised him that he speaks the truth. Although Pontiac was prepared for war, the vision of peace was tempting. He knew that more of his allies were abandoning him with each day, the sickness was decreasing their numbers and the wanted support from the French would never come.¹²⁶ The problem was that his warriors were eager to strike down the British.¹²⁷ In the afternoon of the same day, Pontiac invited all the Indians that were present to discuss the matter. Pontiac accepted the fact that the Delaware and Shawnee made peace with the British and accepted peace offered by the British, but he rejected the accusation that he started the war. In his view, it was the Delaware who invited him to join them in war. After the conference ended, Pontiac accepted to visit Croghan.¹²⁸

In the meantime, Croghan was still waiting at Fort Pitt for representatives of Delaware and Shawnee. He finally got to departure on 15 May when both Delaware and Shawnee representatives arrived. On 8 June, Croghan and his party were ambushed by the Kickapoo, who nearly killed him. Croghan was saved by the Wabash nation Indians who were surprised by his news about peace. On 11 July, the message came from Pontiac to bring Croghan to Fort Chartres.¹²⁹ On 18 July, Croghan arrived at Ouiatanon, where Indian chiefs and Pontiac discussed news about the peace. Croghan explained the news to present Indians and settled matters regarding the peace. After the conference, Croghan invited Pontiac to the conference at Detroit.¹³⁰

3.8 The final peace

On 20 August 1765, Croghan met with Pontiac at Fort Detroit where they discussed peace terms. Pontiac kindly agreed to the proposed terms. Furthermore, Pontiac accepted the British as “Father” and Indians as “children” of the British. Croghan was satisfied with the course of the conference and offered Pontiac an opportunity to return to Detroit. However, Pontiac refused his offer as he knew that his people would get addicted to alcohol again.

¹²⁵ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 189.

¹²⁶ Parkman, *The Conspiracy of Pontiac and the Indian War after the Conquest of Canada*, 229.

¹²⁷ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 190.

¹²⁸ *Ibid*, 191.

¹²⁹ *Ibid*, 195.

¹³⁰ *Ibid*, 196.

Pontiac knew that they would eventually become lazy and stop hunting, or even do some mischief.¹³¹ Furthermore, they have already built their new village near the Maumee River at Roche de Boeuf and Missionary Island.¹³² With the spreading message of Pontiac making peace with the British, other Indians came to Detroit looking for peace.¹³³ Croghan and Campbell were satisfied with the outcome of the conference. Furthermore, Pontiac with the hope of new understanding between the British and Indians spread the message of peace as much as he could.¹³⁴ Croghan held another conference on 27 August with other Detroit tribes who agreed to his peace terms.¹³⁵

The formal peace treaty between the British and Indians was finally written on 23 July 1766. The treaty was signed by Johnson and Indian representatives with the aim to stop all hostilities between the British and Indians.¹³⁶

3.9 The outcome

Although Pontiac mainly focused on besieging Fort Detroit, his leadership played a significant role during the war. Furthermore, Pontiac was the one who took the responsibility and united Indians with the help of Neolin's vision to battle the British. Over two hundred Indians died in the battles during the war and many died because of the smallpox epidemic, thus the Indian economy broke down. One of the British terms was the return of the Shawnee and Delaware captives back to the British, which led to the reduction of Indians because of their low fertility and spread of smallpox. Moreover, the British claimed Indian lands in the Niagara and Detroit regions, thus gaining more control over their territory. After Pontiac's War ended, Indians were called "children" of the British, and the British were called "fathers" of the Indians. These nicknames showed the superiority of the British.¹³⁷

¹³¹ Patrick Tucker, "When War Under Heaven Ended: Tracking Pontiac's and Atawang's Band of Odawa and Ojibwa in Ohio, Walpole Island (Canada), Kansas, and Oklahoma, 1764-1938," Academia, accessed April 6, 2021. https://www.academia.edu/18000195/When_War_Under_Heaven_Ended_Tracking_Pontiacs_and_Atawang_Band_of_Odawa_and_Ojibwa_in_Ohio_Walpole_Island_Canada_Kansas_and_Oklahoma_1764_1938.

¹³² Patrick Tucker, "French Colonial Detroit/Pontiac's War," Academia, accessed April 11, 2021.

https://www.academia.edu/7240006/French_Colonial_Detroit_Pontiacs_War.

¹³³ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 197.

¹³⁴ *Ibid*, 198.

¹³⁵ Parkman, *The Conspiracy of Pontiac and the Indian War after the Conquest of Canada*, 232.

¹³⁶ Sonneborn, *Chronology of American Indian History*, 93.

¹³⁷ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 202.

However, Pontiac and his allies were now respected by the British, which resulted in a change of British policies concerning gift-giving, trade, land, and hunting territories.¹³⁸ In 1766, Johnson invited the Six Nations and Great Lakes Indians to the Oswego conference. Six Nations and Great Lakes Indians accepted his invitation and sent their representatives to Oswego. Johnson followed the Indian customs and smoked a pipe with Indians before they got into the business. Right after, Johnson discussed his thoughts on the trade and gifts. In his view, the trade should be supervised by the assigned British officers who will protect the trade and punish the one who would try to cheat. Johnson then discussed the proclamation line of 1763 with regards to the trade policy and to support his suggestions, he gave many gifts to the Indians. Pontiac and other chiefs were satisfied with the outcome of the conference. Indians believed that this moment was a new beginning for their friendship with the British.¹³⁹

Although the Indians left Oswego with an optimistic view, the British still suffered from racial prejudice, thus they thought of Indians as vermin who keeps them from expanding to the west. Despite the respect which Indians gained in Pontiac's War, they still were not taken as equal citizens among the British.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ Andrew Sturtevant, "Indigenous Politics in Pontiac's War," Oxfordre, accessed April 6, 2021. <https://oxfordre.com/americanhistory/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199329175.001.0001/acrefore-9780199329175-e-502>.

¹³⁹ Middleton, *Pontiac's War*, 203.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 203.

CONCLUSION

Differences between the French and British policies regarding Indians played an essential role in causing Pontiac's War. While the French treated Indians as their "brothers", the British suffered from racial prejudice which supported their hatred of Indians; they were nothing more but vermin for the British. Furthermore, the British insatiate desire for wealth and new lands pushed Indians more to the west, which increased their anxieties. The British did not see the need to continue the French customs of gift-giving and fair-trade which resulted in increasing conflicts. This was much thanks to Amherst, who believed that Indians should not be bought, but reformed. Amherst believed that he could change their behavior as with normal Europeans, but he was greatly mistaken.

Pontiac was a well-respected chief among Great Lakes' Indians whose leadership played a key role in Pontiac's War when he assembled Indians of various tribes and began the battle with the British. Pontiac's influence, Indian pressure, and military expenses during the war made the British try diplomacy instead of fighting. Pontiac showed the British that Indians are not someone that they could look down upon, but rather should respect.

As this respect grew, the custom of gift-giving was restored, some of natives' lands were returned and the Crown established a proclamation line that the British colonists were prohibited from crossing. Furthermore, British officials promised Pontiac and other Indians that they would adopt a fair-trade practices, similar to those of the French. From then on, a supervisor would oversee trades and punish cheaters. As a result, Indians achieved the desired changes for which they fought. Furthermore, they went from being savages with no land rights to semi-autonomous legal residents of British lands.

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