

Pontiac's Rebellion begins

Pontiac's Rebellion begins when a confederacy of Native American warriors under Ottawa chief Pontiac attacks the British force at Detroit. After failing to take the fort in their initial assault, Pontiac's forces, made up of Ottawas and reinforced by Wyandots, Ojibwas, and Potawatamis, initiated a siege that would stretch into months.

As the French and Indian Wars came to an end in the early 1760s, Native Americans living in former French territory found the new British authorities to be far less *conciliatory* than their predecessors. In 1762, Pontiac enlisted support from practically every Indian tribe from Lake Superior to the lower Mississippi for a joint campaign to expel the British from the formerly French lands. According to Pontiac's plan, each tribe would seize the nearest fort and then join forces to wipe out the undefended settlements.

In April, Pontiac convened a war council on the banks of the Ecorse River near Detroit. It was decided that Pontiac and his warriors would gain access to the British fort at Detroit under the pretense of negotiating a peace treaty, giving them an opportunity to seize forcibly the arsenal there. However, British Major Henry Gladwin learned of the plot, and the British were ready when Pontiac arrived in early May, and Pontiac was forced to begin a siege. At the same time, his allies in Pennsylvania began a siege of Fort Pitt, while other sympathetic tribes, such as the Delaware, the Shawnees, and the Seneca, prepared to move against various British forts and outposts in Michigan, New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia.

On July 31, a British relief expedition attacked Pontiac's camp but suffered heavy losses and were *repelled* in the Battle of Bloody Run. Nevertheless, they had succeeded in providing the fort at Detroit with reinforcements and supplies, which allowed it to hold out against the Indians into the fall. The major forts at Pitt and Niagara likewise held on, but the united tribes captured eight other fortified posts. At these forts, the *garrisons* were wiped out, relief expeditions were repulsed, and nearby frontier settlements were destroyed.

In the spring of 1764, two British armies were sent out, one into Pennsylvania and Ohio under Colonel Bouquet, and the other to the Great Lakes under Colonel John Bradstreet. Bouquet's campaign met with success, and the Delawares and the Shawnees were forced to sue for peace, breaking Pontiac's alliance. Failing to persuade tribes in the West to join his rebellion, and lacking the hoped-for support from the French, Pontiac finally signed a treaty with the British in 1766. In 1769, he was murdered by a Peoria Indian while visiting Illinois. His death led to bitter warfare among the tribes, and the Peorias were nearly wiped out.

- 1) Explain why the Natives begin a rebellion against their new "landlords" west of the Appalachians?

- 2) Explain how Pontiac tried to “trick” his way into Fort Detroit?

- 3) Define from the context:
 - a. Conciliatory

 - b. Repelled

- 4) Explain why Pontiac wasn't able to be successful in his rebellion.

- 5) How did the rebellion end for Pontiac and what happened to him?

Proclamation of 1763

The end of the French and Indian War in 1763 was a cause for great celebration in the colonies, for it removed several ominous barriers and opened up a host of new opportunities for the colonists. The French had effectively hemmed in the British settlers and had, from the perspective of the settlers, played the "Indians" against them. The first thing on the minds of colonists was the great western frontier that had opened to them when the French ceded that contested territory to the British.

- 1) What were the Colonists excited about after the end of the French and Indian War?

The royal proclamation of 1763 did much to dampen that celebration. The proclamation, in effect, closed off the frontier to colonial expansion. The King and his council presented the proclamation as a measure to calm the fears of the Indians, who felt that the colonists would

drive them from their lands as they expanded westward. Many in the colonies felt that the object was to pen them in along the Atlantic seaboard where they would be easier to regulate. No doubt there was a large measure of truth in both of these positions. However the colonists could not help but feel a strong resentment when what they perceived to be their prize was snatched away from them. The proclamation provided that all lands west of the heads of all rivers which flowed into the Atlantic Ocean from the west or northwest were off-limits to the colonists. This excluded the rich Ohio Valley and all territory from the Ohio to the Mississippi rivers from settlement.

2) According to the *proclamation* why was it necessary to keep Colonists from moving into the West?

3) Did the Colonists see / understand Great Britain's logic?

The proclamation also established or defined four new colonies, three of them on the continent proper. Quebec, which was of course already well settled, two colonies to be called East Florida and West Florida — and off the continent, Grenada. These facts were established immediately, but most of the proclamation is devoted to the subject of Indians and Indian lands. It asserted that all of the Indian peoples were thereafter under the protection of the King. It required that all lands within the "Indian territory" occupied by Englishmen were to be abandoned.

4) What four "new" British colonies were created with the *Proclamation of 1763*?

5) Though these four colonies were created, what was the focus of the *Proclamation of 1763*?

It included a list of prohibited activities, provided for enforcement of the new laws, and indicted unnamed persons for fraudulent practices in acquiring lands from the Indians in times past.

Resolution of the hostilities of the French and Indian War was a difficult problem for the crown. Most of the Indian tribes had been allied with the French during the war, because they found the French less hostile and generally more trustworthy than the English settlers. Now the French would depart, and the Indians were left behind to defend themselves and their grounds as best they could. Relations between the Indians and the English colonials were so poor that few settlers would argue in public that the Indians had rights to any lands. In this proclamation the King sided with the Indians, against the perceived interests of the settlers. Moreover, it provided, and Parliament soon after executed, British royal posts along the proclamation boundary. Parliament was under no illusions about relations between the Indians and the colonists. They understood that the colonists would not respect the boundary without some enforcement mechanism. Finally, the English were interested in improving the fur trade, which involved the Indians and independent trappers who lived out on the frontier.

6) What trade wouldn't allow for Colonists to respect this border and just pass it?

The Proclamation line extended from the Atlantic coast at Quebec to the newly established border of West Florida. Establishing and manning posts along the length of this boundary was a very costly undertaking. The British ministry would argue that these outposts (which were guarded by upwards of 6,000 British soldiers) were for colonial defense, and as such should be paid for by the colonies. From the American perspective this amounted to a tax on the colonies to pay for a matter of Imperial regulation that was opposed to the interests of the colonies.

7) Where exactly was the Proclamation line? Where didn't this allow the Colonists to go?

8) Who had to pay for the line, the defense, and everything else associated with it?

9) Give as many reasons as possible as to why the Colonists opposed the *Proclamation Act of 1763*.