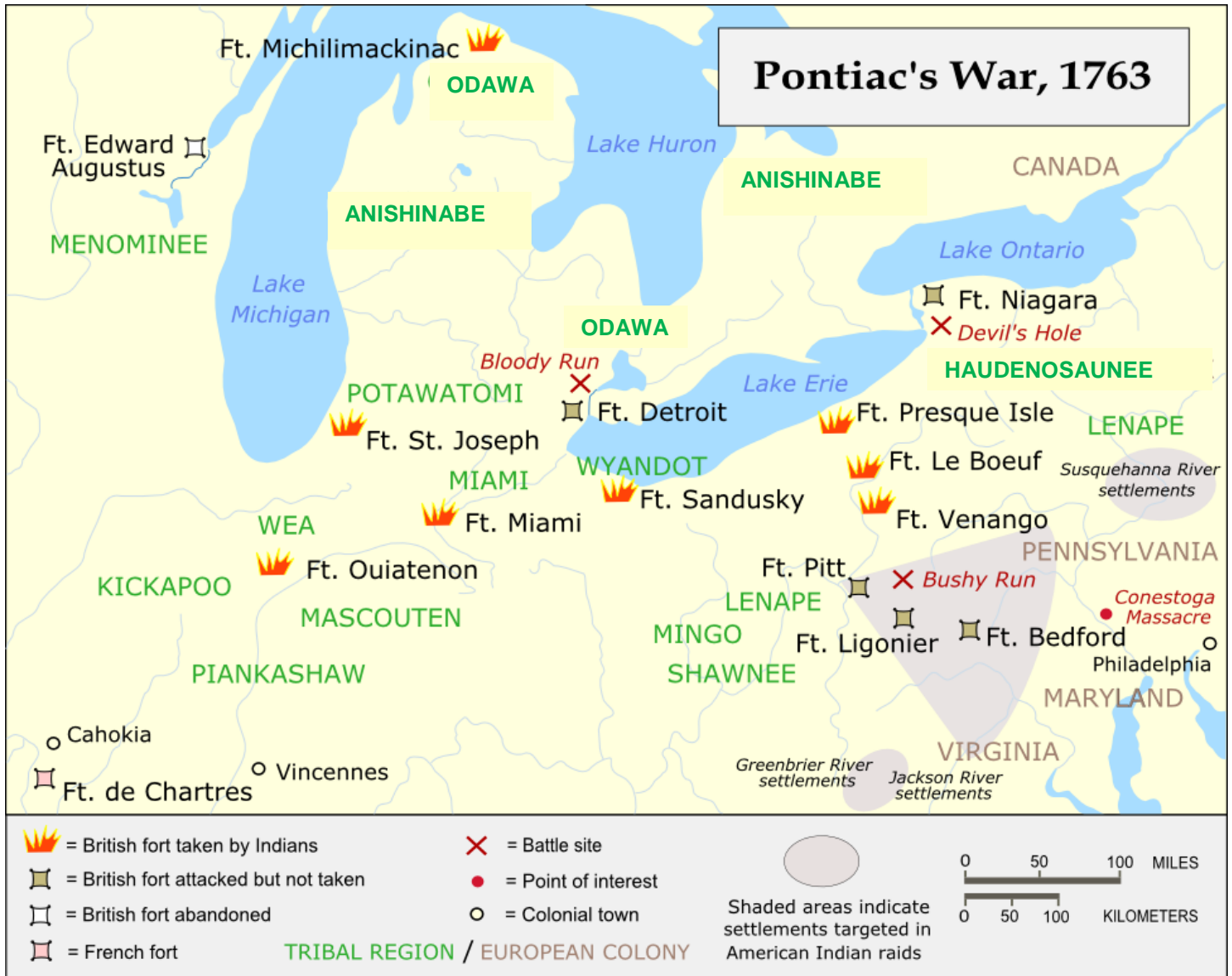


Pontiac's War



- The Treaty of Paris (1763) ended the French and Indian War (Seven Years War) between the European Powers, **but DID NOT include their First Nations' allies.**
- British troops proceeded to occupy the various forts in the Ohio Country and Great Lakes region previously garrisoned by the French. Even before the war officially ended with the Treaty of Paris (1763), the British Crown began to implement changes in order to administer its vastly expanded North American territory. While the French had long cultivated alliances among First Nations, the British post-war approach was essentially to treat Indigenous People as a conquered group. Before long, First Nations who had been allies of the defeated French found themselves increasingly dissatisfied with the British occupation and the new policies imposed by the victors.

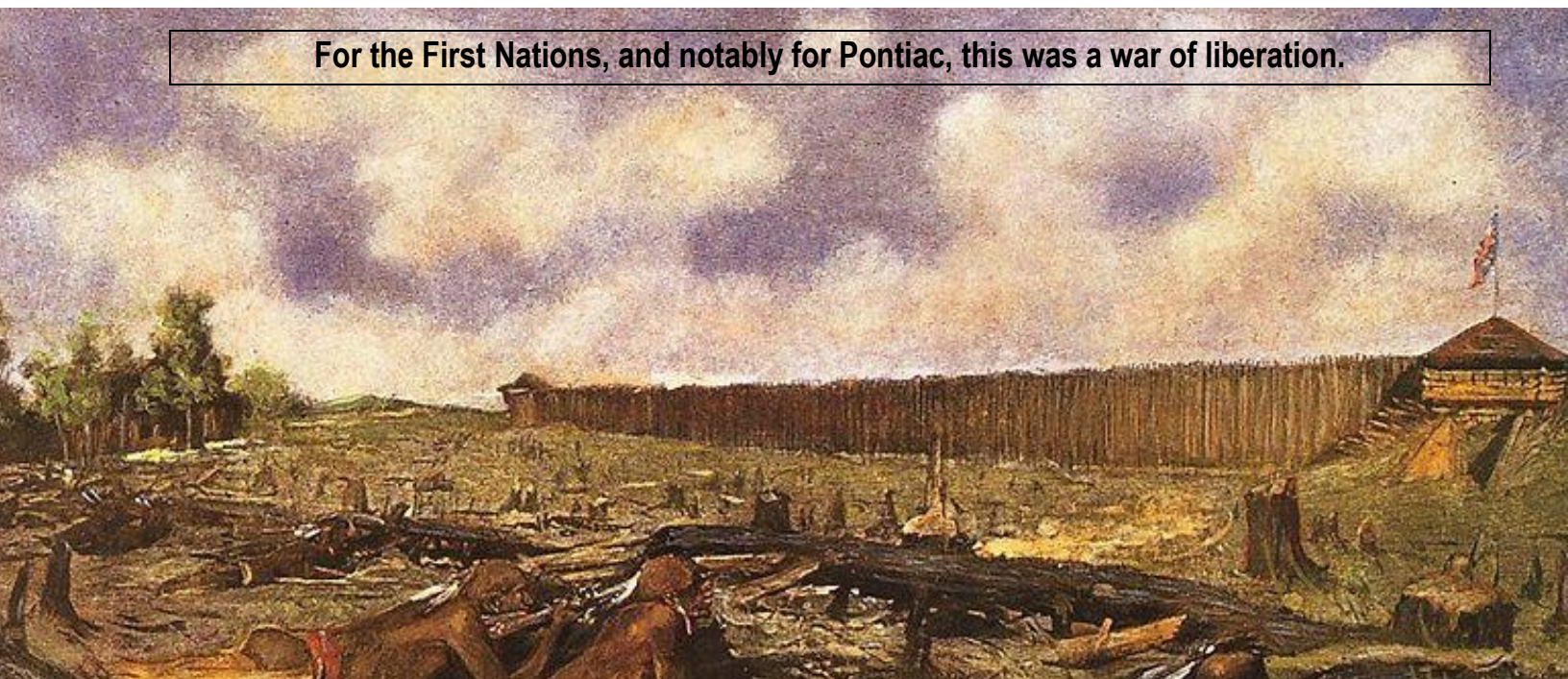
- **General Amherst, the British commander-in-chief in North America believed that with France out of the picture, the First Nations would have no other choice than to accept British rule.** He also believed that First Nations were incapable of offering any serious resistance to the British Army; therefore, of the 8,000 troops under his command in North America, only about 500 were stationed in the region where the war erupted.



General Amherst

- Amherst began a policy of reducing the amounts of gifts (including guns and ammunition) presented to First Nations during Crown-First Nations Councils (gift-giving is an important part of First Nations' alliances). Sir William Johnson, the Superintendent of the Indian Department, tried to warn Amherst of the dangers of cutting back on presents and gunpowder.
- Many chiefs played their parts in the ensuing conflict, but the greatest among them was the Odawa chief Obwandiyag, whom the English called **Pontiac**. He was an imposing figure, tall strong and heavily tattooed, in the custom of the Ottawa. He fashioned his straight black hair in a narrow pompadour and wore silver bracelets on his arms and a collar of white plumes around his neck. He was courageous and commanded respect far beyond his own people. No true images of Pontiac survive today.
- Pontiac was inspired by the words of Neolin, the Delaware prophet, who warned his people "if you allow the English among you, you are dead. Maladies, smallpox, and their poison will destroy you totally." By the spring of 1763 Pontiac was contemplating war. With the support of the neighbouring Potawatomis and Wendat, he hatched a plan to capture Fort Detroit. When a spy revealed the plan, Pontiac laid siege. Historians have called the conflict that followed a "conspiracy," "treason," or an "uprising."

For the First Nations, and notably for Pontiac, this was a war of liberation.





- The war spread for a month throughout the Great Lakes and Ohio Valley, with a series of victories that sent the British reeling. A war party of Odawas surprised a rescue force at Point Pelee, capturing 46 English soldiers and two boats. Pontiac's success encouraged the Miamis, Illinois, Weas, Kickapoos, Mascoutens, Delawares, and Shawnees to join. The Ojibwas captured Fort Michilimackinac (pictured above) with their famous ruse of distracting the garrison with a game of lacrosse and following a stray ball into the fort. Pontiac then intercepted some 260 British reinforcements in a bloody encounter on the bridge across Parent's Creek (later called Bloody Run). The British, cut to pieces, hurried back to the fort. It was at this low point that Amherst made his infamous suggestion: "Could it not be contrived to send the small pox among the disaffected tribes of Indians?"

Strength:

British	First Nations
3000 +/-	3500 +/-

Losses (according to Wikipedia):

British	First Nations
450 soldiers killed, 2,000 civilians killed or captured, 4,000 civilians displaced	~200 warriors killed, possible additional war-related deaths from disease