

The French and Indian War

One American's Story

Chief Pontiac was a leader of the Ottawa, a Native American group. When the British took over French forts in the Great Lakes area, Pontiac led his people in raids against them. This conflict is known as **Pontiac's Rebellion** (1763–1764). Addressing his followers, Pontiac said

PRIMARY SOURCE

“It is important for us, my brothers, that we exterminate from our lands this nation which seeks only to destroy us. . . . Therefore, my brothers, we must all swear their destruction and wait no longer.”

—Pontiac, quoted in *Pontiac and the Indian Uprising*

Pontiac's rebellion followed the **French and Indian War**, in which French forces fought British forces in North America. Each side had Native American allies.



Pontiac

Europeans in Native American Lands

KEY QUESTION Why were Native Americans involved in conflicts between Europeans?

The English and the French created rival empires in North America. The competition between these two European powers often led to war.

France Claims Western Lands The French claimed the Ohio River valley, the Mississippi River valley, and the Great Lakes region. The French territory of Louisiana, claimed by La Salle in 1682, stretched from the Ohio River valley to the Rocky Mountains. They called these lands “New France.” Some Europeans in New France were fur traders. Others were Jesuit (JEHZH•oo•iht) priests working to convert Native Americans to Christianity.