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**PONTIAC AND THE SIEGE
OF DETROIT**

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Queen's University at Kingston

PONTIAC AND THE SIEGE OF DETROIT

WITH the capture of Louisbourg and Quebec and the capitulation of Montreal, the French were driven from the American continent, save for Louisiana and a few isolated forts along the Mississippi. The English in America rejoiced with a great joy. For over one hundred years their settlements had been harried by French war-parties and their Indian allies. They thought that now they would be able to extend their territory into the fertile Indian country, and carry on trade without being in constant dread of attack. With the French gone, they believed that they had no serious reasons to fear the Indians. In this they were sadly mistaken. The natives viewed with alarm the westward progress of the settlers in New England, New York and Pennsylvania. They hated the English traders, who, by sharp practices, in many cases, robbed them of their furs. On the other hand all the tribes from Montreal to the western prairies had

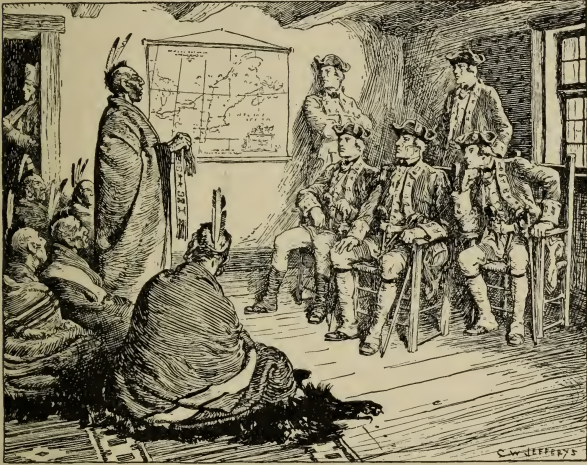
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long been on most friendly terms with the French. They had been kindly treated by the French traders and authorities. Simple gifts had been showered upon them. When they were about to go to their hunting grounds, they were supplied, on credit, with provisions and ammunition, and the priests among them took a paternal attitude towards their flocks.

With the conquest of Canada their new rulers treated them differently, held aloof from them, in many cases acted towards them with great discourtesy, even used them brutally when they visited the English trading-posts, and held back the accustomed gifts and refused them credit. Among all the tribes unrest was soon prevalent, and it needed only a leader to arouse them to attack the invaders of their hunting grounds. Such a leader was at hand. In Pontiac, the great war chief of the Ottawas, they found a man capable of uniting the scattered tribes and, for a time at least, of coping successfully with the troops sent into the West after the Conquest.

At this time Detroit was the most important centre of population west of Montreal.

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PONTIAC IN COUNCIL WITH GLADWYN AT DETROIT

THE INDIANS ARE SEATED ON MATS SPREAD UPON THE FLOOR, WRAPPED IN THEIR BLANKETS, WHICH CONCEALED THEIR WEAPONS, AWAITING THE SIGNAL WHICH PONTIAC WAS TO GIVE DURING HIS SPEECH. HE HOLDS IN HIS HAND THE BELT OF WAMPUM, WHICH WAS ALWAYS PRESENTED AT CONFERENCES. IF PONTIAC LIFTED THE BELT IN A CERTAIN WAY, THE INDIANS WERE TO SPRING TO THEIR FEET AND ATTACK THE OFFICERS. THE BRITISH, WARNED OF THE PLOT, HOWEVER, WERE FULLY ARMED, WEARING THEIR SWORDS, AND WITH PISTOLS IN THEIR BELTS, WHILE IN THE ADJOINING PASSAGES SOLDIERS WITH LOADED MUSKETS WERE ON GUARD. PONTIAC, THEREFORE, CONCLUDED HIS SPEECH WITHOUT GIVING THE SIGNAL.

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For nearly one hundred years French settlers had cultivated their fields, and planted their orchards, along the fertile stretch of land between Lake Erie and Lake St. Clair. In 1760 about one thousand inhabitants, settlers and traders, dwelt in this region, which had as its centre Fort Detroit.

In the autumn of 1760 Major Robert Rogers was sent westward to occupy Detroit and the other French forts. When he reached Detroit, Sieur de Belêtre, the commander, when convinced that the French had been driven from New France, reluctantly surrendered his post. The fickle Indians on this occasion gathered in force, and, as the Lilies of France were lowered and the Cross of St. George run up on the flagstaff of Fort Detroit, shouted an enthusiastic welcome to Rogers and his men. This new, powerful, rich people, who had conquered the French, were looked upon as the bringers of unlimited gifts of clothing, ammunition and rum. They were quickly undeceived; the presents were not forthcoming, and the spirit of comradeship that had existed between them and the French was no more. The Senecas, Shawnees, and

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Delawares were soon sending out their war belts. A plot was formed to seize Forts Pitt, Niagara and Detroit. Sir Jeffery Amherst, the British commander-in-chief, thought that nothing was to be feared, and treated with contempt the rumours of an Indian war, believing that the handful of men he had stationed at each of the different forts in the west would be able to keep the Indians in check.

All through the years 1761 and 1762 the storm threatened. About this time Pontiac appeared on the scene. He was then fifty years old, a warrior of repute, who had done valiant service under the great Montcalm. He was not the type usually known as the noble red man. Lithe as a panther, a warrior from his youth, he was skilled in forest warfare, and had a magnetism that brought to his side many followers. They trusted him for his skill and daring, and admired the treachery with which he was able to circumvent his enemies. At the time of the outbreak of war in the hinterland of British North America he had pitched his wigwam on an island in Lake St. Clair, Ile à la Pêche, and from this point organized his great con-

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spiracy against the British. The Indians trusted him. He had the friendship of the French, and he was careful to foster that friendship by maintaining that his only purpose was to restore French rule in the west. Immediately under his influence were three tribes—the Ottawas, the Chippewas, and the Potawatomis. This was known as the Ottawa Confederacy, or the “Confederacy of the Three Fires.” In close alliance with this confederacy were such tribes as the Sacs and Foxes, dwelling to the west of Lake Michigan, and the Wyandots, a remnant of the ancient Hurons, now settled on the Detroit River.

In profound secrecy Pontiac made his preparations for capturing the western forts. He sent war belts to all the tribes along the Great Lakes and the Ohio valley. He was ready to strike in the spring of 1763, and although Sir Jeffery Amherst had ample warning of the unrest in the Indian country, he maintained that, “this alarm will end in nothing more than a rash attempt of what the Senecas have been threatening,” and made no preparations to meet the gathering storm.

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In April, 1763, Pontiac, who was familiar with every detail of the Detroit settlement, and was on friendly terms with the French inhabitants, moved his camp to the River Ecorces, ten miles south of Detroit, and waited the tribes he had summoned to a council of war. Toward the end of April, nearly five hundred warriors—Ottawas, Potawatomis, Chippewas and Wyandots—with their squaws and papooses, gathered at the meeting-place, filled with a common hatred of "the dogs dressed in red," the British soldiers.

At this meeting Pontiac addressed the tribes in fiery, eloquent words, pouring forth a stream of denunciation against the British, who, he declared, had cheated the Indians, robbed them of their furs, overcharged them for the necessaries of life, and heaped insults and blows on such Indians as visited the forts. As he spoke he held aloft a red and purple wampum belt, declaring that he had received it from the King of France, who commanded the Indians to take up arms against the British. He next appealed to the superstition of his followers. The "Master of Life," he said, had told a

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Delaware Indian, who had journeyed to heaven, that the Indians were to "drive out" and "make war upon" the "dogs clothed in red who will do you nothing but harm." As he finished speaking every brave present shouted his readiness to go to war. It was decided that Pontiac should, as a preliminary step, "go to the fort with his young men for a peace dance, in order to get information regarding the strength of the place."

Fort Detroit, at this time, was a wilderness post of considerable strength. Built in the form of a parallelogram, it was surrounded by a palisade twenty-five feet high. The walls had an extent of over one thousand paces. A bastion guarded each corner, and over each gate was a blockhouse. It contained about one hundred houses, the little church of Ste. Anne's, officers' quarters, and a range of barracks. The buildings were nearly all wooden structures, thatched with bark or straw. Narrow little streets intersected the place, and immediately within the palisades a wide road extended round the entire village. Major Henry Gladwyn was in command, and had one hundred and twenty soldiers, and two

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armed schooners, the *Gladwyn* and the *Beaver*—a small force to beat back the attacks of nearly one thousand savages.

Pontiac came to Detroit on May 1, 1763, and requested admittance on the ground that he and the warriors with him, forty in all, wished to show their love for the British by dancing the calumet, or peace dance. At this time Gladwyn had no suspicion of Pontiac's design, and readily admitted him and his companions. For about an hour thirty of the band, who had taken up their position in front of the officers' quarters, went through their grotesque movements, shouting and dancing to the music of the Indian drums, all the time waving their calumets as a sign of friendship. While the dance was in progress ten of the band wandered through the village, making careful note of the number of men and the strength of the palisades. When the dance came to an end, Gladwyn distributed presents among the visitors, who then left the fort seemingly well pleased with their reception, and expressing great friendship for the British.

Pontiac next called together the chiefs and warriors of the Confederacy to a meet-

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ing in the council house in the Potawatomi village, south of the fort. He once more addressed them with burning eloquence, vehemently denouncing the British, and concluded by saying, that the great desire of the new-comers was the destruction of the Indians, and it therefore was necessary, as an act of self-preservation, to destroy them. He again held aloft the war-belt, which he claimed he had received from the King of France, and declared that he had been ordered to strike in his own interest, and in the interest of the French. He told his eager listeners that he had sent belts to the tribes far and wide, and that all were ready to join with him in his attack on the English. He knew by the grunts and shouts of approval that all the warriors were ready to follow him to battle, and he then revealed his plan to capture the fort and destroy the garrison.

With some fifty chiefs and warriors he would wait on Gladwyn as if to discuss matters of importance. Each would carry beneath his blanket a gun with the barrel cut short. Other warriors, and even women, were to come to the fort at the same time,

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and place themselves in positions of advantage in the streets ready to strike with tomahawks, knives and guns, which were to be concealed beneath their blankets. Pontiac was to address Gladwyn and hand him a wampum belt. If he deemed it wise to strike, he would hold the belt with its reverse side towards Gladwyn. This was to be the signal for attack. Blankets were then to be thrown aside and the officers shot down. When the firing began in the council room the Indians scattered through the town were to attack the garrison and kill every British soldier. Here was a plan which offered abundant slaughter and plunder. It had a strong appeal to the savages and was heartily concurred in, and, before the warriors scattered to their various villages, the morning of May 7th was chosen for carrying out the plot.

Such a plot was not easy to conceal. French blacksmiths were asked by many Indians to aid in shortening the guns. Members of the British garrison, too, had friends among the Indians, and not a few of the French inhabitants viewed with horror the murderous scheme. On the 6th, definite

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news of it was brought to Gladwyn. Just who his informant was it is hard to tell. It is generally thought to have been a Chippawa maiden, but it was most probably an Ottawa Indian named Mahiganne. Besides he had, no doubt, had hints of it from some of the friendly French. He straightway prepared to receive Pontiac and his chiefs. The soldiers and the traders within the fort were ordered to prepare for attack, and the guards were doubled. On the night of the 6th, as the watchful sentries went their rounds, occasional yells and war-whoops told them that the war dance was being performed as a preparation for the work of the morrow.

At daybreak on the 7th Gladwyn had all the traders' stores closed, and all the able-bodied men in the fort placed under arms. The gates, however, were left open, and soon Indians and squaws began to gather in the fort as if to trade. Pontiac at the head of his fifty painted and plumed warriors, each wrapped in a blanket, marched along the road leading to the river gate at ten o'clock in the morning, and silently entered the fort. They were astonished at the war-

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like preparations that had been made, but concealed their chagrin. When they entered the council chamber they saw on all sides sentinels fully armed, while the commandant and his officers were seated with pistols in their belts, and swords by their sides. For a moment they feared that the men they had come to attack were about to attack them, and it was some time before they would take their seats on the mats made ready for them. There was a grim silence in the council chamber, broken at length by Pontiac, who asked why so many of the British soldiers saw fit to bear arms on this day. He was answered that it was for exercise and discipline. He then addressed Gladwyn declaring his undying friendship for the British. But while he spoke Gladwyn eyed him sternly, and when he was about to present the wampum belt as a token of friendship, a signal was given and the drums rolled out a warning note. Pontiac now knew that his plot had been revealed. He nervously lowered the belt, but recovering himself, presented it in the ordinary way. Gladwyn, in replying to him, declared that he would have the protection

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and the friendship of the British so long as he deserved it. Presents were then handed to the Indians and the council was at an end. The chiefs thereupon tightly wrapped their blankets about them, filed out of the fort, followed by about three hundred other Indians who had assembled in the hope of slaughter and plunder.

Pontiac's great plot had failed, but he did not despair of being able to capture Fort Detroit by treachery and without the loss of many of his warriors, and so, on the following day, he appeared at the main entrance with a pipe of peace. He was admitted with a number of chiefs, the pipe was smoked by the officers and chiefs, and, as a further mark of friendship, Pontiac presented it to Captain Donald Campbell, who, while in command of Fort Detroit, had won the friendship of the Indians and the French. On the next day he again came to the gate, but found it closed. The sentries had noticed groups of Indians crowding the common just outside of musket range. So when he sought admittance, Gladwyn, feeling that treachery was meditated, told him that he might enter alone, but that his com-

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rades must remain without. This angered Pontiac who swiftly strode back to his followers and appeared to issue commands. With wild yells and war-whoops the Indians rushed away to slaughter and plunder. They immediately killed an English woman, Mrs. Turnbull, and her two sons, who dwelt about half a mile behind the fort. A number of Ottawas leaped into a canoe and paddled speedily to Ile au Cochon (Belle Isle), killed and scalped a former British sergeant, James Fisher, and carried off his young wife and their two children. Thus was open war declared, and Gladwyn now knew that only eternal watchfulness would enable him to hold Fort Detroit.

On May 10 the garrison found itself in a state of siege. Before daybreak the fort was surrounded by a yelling horde of savages, who from safe shelter behind barns, outhouses and fences, kept up a steady fire. This continued for six hours, but only five of the defenders were wounded. The fire was so vigorously returned that the Indians dare not attempt to rush the palisades. From the shelter of several buildings a particularly galling fire was maintained. A

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three-pounder gun was directed against this position. Spikes heated red hot were rammed into the weapon and soon the buildings were a mass of flames. Their shelter gone, the Indians fled for their lives. The attack ceased, and Pontiac's followers returned to their village.

Gladwyn now tried to end the struggle by negotiation. He sent a messenger to Pontiac asking the cause of the attack, and offering to redress any wrongs from which the Indians might be suffering. Pontiac, after some hesitation, requested that Captain Campbell should come to his village to discuss terms. Campbell, accompanied by Lieut. George McDougall, journeyed to the Ottawa encampment, then stationed at Parent's Creek. As the officers approached the village they were met by a howling mob, who threatened their lives. Pontiac restored order, simulated friendship with Campbell, and listened to what he had to say, but when negotiations were ended, refused to allow him to return to the fort. For two months the officers were kept close prisoners, and in the end the heroic Campbell was treacherously and brutally murdered.

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Until this time, due to the efforts of Father Potier, the missionary to the Wyandots, only a few of that tribe had joined the conspirators, but, on May 11, Pontiac visited the Wyandot village and threatened to annihilate the tribe if they did not join with him. Under this threat they took up arms against the British, and during the siege were to be Pontiac's mainstay.

Once more the Indians, six hundred strong, attacked Detroit, but were repulsed with considerable loss, and Pontiac, in his turn, tried negotiations. He promised Gladwyn that if he surrendered, his men would be allowed to board the schooners at Detroit and sail eastward unmolested. Gladwyn's officers, knowing that there was no hope of relief from the east, and that food was almost at an end, counselled accepting Pontiac's terms, but Gladwyn declared that he would not yield while "one pound of food and one pound of powder were left in the fort." He laughed at Pontiac's proposal, and told him to save his ammunition for hunting.

Starvation threatened the inhabitants of the fort, but it was to be saved by the gener-

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osity of a loyal and courageous French-Canadian, Jacques Bâby, a trader and merchant living opposite the fort. He had a large establishment, and owned thirty slaves ready to do his bidding. About a week after the siege commenced, he offered to supply the fort with food, and on a dark night had ferried across, in six large canoes, quantities of beef, pork and meal, sufficient to last the fort for nearly a month.

While Detroit was in this state of siege, isolated bands of Indians were busy in other quarters. On May 16 Fort Sandusky was captured, and the garrison slaughtered or taken prisoners; on the 25th, Fort St. Joseph, on Lake Michigan, was captured; on May 27 Fort Miami met a similar fate. About the same time Fort Ouiatanon, on the Wabash, fell a prey to the savages; on June 4, the important post of Michilimackimac was treacherously captured by a band composed mainly of Chippewas and Sacs, who slew or captured the entire garrison. On June 15 two hundred Wyandots attacked Fort Presqu'île, on the southern shore of Lake Erie, and captured it after the garrison had for several days made a heroic resis-

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tance. Fort LeBoeuf was attacked on the 18th, but the garrison managed to escape, and made their way to Fort Venango, only to find that it had been destroyed by the Indians. With the exception of forts Niagara, Detroit and Pitt all the British posts in the Indian country were in the hands of the Indians, and the garrisons slain or prisoners, save for a mere handful who had escaped. Throughout the whole west there was a reign of terror; frontier homes were burned and the inhabitants slaughtered, and traders who had ventured into the Indian country were plundered and ruthlessly slain. For a time it looked as if not a British soldier or settler would be left alive in the region west of Niagara and the Alleghanies.

While these tragic occurrences were taking place the siege of Detroit continued. The Indians closely infested the place, but, due to the watchfulness of the garrison, they were unable to reach the palisades from the landward side, and the river front was made comparatively safe by the presence of the two armed schooners. About the middle of May a convoy with provisions and ammuni-

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tion was expected from the east, and the *Gladwyn* sailed down the Detroit river to meet it. The watchful Indians swarmed about the vessel, but a favouring breeze enabled it to escape to the open lake. The convoy was nowhere to be seen, and the *Gladwyn* sailed for the Niagara with the news of the Indian rising against the western forts.

The expected convoy had set out from Fort Schlosser. Lieut. Abraham Cuyler was in command of ten bateaux, bearing the ninety-six men. At Point Pelée on the northern shore of Lake Erie a landing was made. A party of Wyandots from Detroit were lying in wait for Cuyler and his men. As they leisurely pitched their tents the Indians attacked them from a thick wood, and while they were in confusion dashed upon them with terrifying war-whoops. The soldiers rushed to their boats and succeeded in launching five of them. Two of the abandoned boats were seized by the Indians, who, going in pursuit, captured three of the escaping vessels. The two others—in one of which was Cuyler, badly wounded—escaped. The captured soldiers

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were taken to the Detroit, and at Pontiac's camp were brutally tortured and slain.

About the middle of June, the *Gladwyn* was returning from the Niagara with supplies and men. The Indians learned of its approach, and made ready for its capture. At Turkey Island they had erected a breast-work. As the vessel had to pass close to this spot the Indians planned to attack it with their muskets and during the ensuing confusion to dart out in their canoes, seize the vessel and slaughter the crew. But the *Gladwyn* was well-manned, and the officers on the alert. They hoped for attack, and were prepared for it. Cuyler, who had suffered so much at the hands of the Wyandots, was on board with twenty-two members of his ill-fated convoy and all were eager for revenge. The *Gladwyn* fearessly sailed up stream, and as night fell leisurely cast anchor immediately in front of Turkey Island. On her decks a mere handful of men were to be seen; the majority of the troops and crew having been concealed in the hold. The Indians, thinking she was weakly-manned, about midnight silently stole toward her in their canoes. When they

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were within pistol shot, the sudden clang of a hammer on the mast broke the stillness of the night. The soldiers leaped from the hold, a hurricane of lead and iron from muskets and cannon swept the approaching canoes. Fourteen of the attackers were killed, many wounded, and the survivors made their way ashore as best they could. From behind their barricade they began to fire on the vessel, but she weighed anchor and drifted down stream to safety. Two days later she reached the fort, but not before raking the village of the treacherous Wyandots with a crushing broadside. The troops were welcome, but even more so the cargo of one hundred and fifty barrels of provisions and ammunition. This would enable the garrison to hold out for at least another month.

The *Gladwyn*, too, brought news that peace had been declared between France and England. This had a twofold effect. It made the better class of the French inhabitants determined to throw in their lot with the English, but it greatly embittered others, who declared it was a mere ruse on the part of *Gladwyn* to gain time. Pontiac was

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greatly disturbed, and summoned the inhabitants to a council, urging them to ignore the tidings of peace and join with him in exterminating the English. In closing his speech he said: "If you are French, accept this war belt for yourselves, or your young men, and join us; if you are English, we declare war on you." A number joined him—for the most part half-breeds, or men who had married squaws. On the other hand some of the more prominent were outspoken in their loyalty to their new rulers, and, fearing for their lives, sought shelter in the fort.

The siege went on. The *Gladwyn* and the *Beaver* had been a great source of annoyance to Pontiac. They fearlessly manoeuvred up and down the river, and never lost a chance of pouring broadsides into the Indian villages. Pontiac, determined, if possible, to destroy these vessels. He decided to try the plan unsuccessfully attempted by the French against the British fleet at Quebec in 1759. He joined some bateaux together, loaded them with inflammable material, and sent them blazing toward the hated vessels; but they floated

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past the schooners, and harmlessly burned themselves out. He next planned a gigantic fire raft, and for over a week his Indians toiled like beavers at its construction, but something went wrong and it was never used.

In July an expedition, under the command of Capt. James Dalyell, an experienced Indian fighter, left Fort Schlosser for Fort Detroit. It consisted of twenty-two barges carrying about three hundred men, cannon and supplies. This strong force arrived safely at the fort on July 29. Dalyell and his followers were eager to teach Pontiac a lesson, and begged Gladwyn to allow them to sally forth in force and attack the Indians. Experience had taught Gladwyn to be cautious, but Dalyell and Colonel Robert Rogers, of the Rangers, who was with him, were so confident and insistent that he at length consented. So, on the morning of July 31, two hundred and fifty men marched out of the river gate, and in the darkness, under the guidance of two French Canadians, Bâby and Martin, moved cautiously toward Pontiac's camp at Parent's Creek. They thought that the

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Indians were totally unaware of their designs; but Pontiac had his spies at the fort, and was fully informed of the hour of their departure, their numbers and their route. As they advanced through the darkness stealthy figures dogged their steps, waiting stoically for the signal to attack. At length the bridge over Parent's Creek was reached. As the advance guard moved across it, followed by the main body, densely packed, and eager to get at their treacherous enemy, a galling musketry fire swept their ranks. Soon the stream under the bridge ran red with blood, and from this circumstance was ever after to be known as Bloody Run. The troops recoiled under the fire; Dalyell rallied them, and they even succeeded in gaining the opposite heights, but they were met with such a destructive fire that it was found necessary to sound the retreat. Inch by inch they fought their way back to the fort, which they did not reach until eight o'clock in the morning. Their loss had been heavy; their leader, Dalyell, was killed; twenty of his men were likewise slain, and over forty wounded. About eight hundred Indian warriors took part in

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this attack. It did little to advance Pontiac's fortunes. The fort had still over three hundred effective men, and sufficient provisions and ammunition to withstand a long siege.

Nothing of importance occurred until September 3. All through the month of August the Indians carried on sniping attacks, but made no attempt to rush the fort. On September 3 the *Gladwyn* was returning from a mission to Niagara. She had a small crew of ten men, commanded by Capt. Horst and mate Jacobs, and on board six Iroquois Indians. The vessel was becalmed, and these Indians asked permission to have a short run on shore. Horst unwisely allowed them to land; they promptly made off and told Pontiac's warriors of the weak condition of the *Gladwyn*. The Indians determined to capture the vessel, and about midnight three hundred warriors stole out in their canoes to seize her. They were almost upon her before they were observed. A crashing volley was sent into the canoes, but did not retard their progress. In a moment a horde of painted

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demons were clambering over the vessel's side from stem to stern. The crew put up a heroic fight, striking right and left with spears and hatchets. Horst and several of the small crew were killed; all seemed lost, when Jacobs shouted an order to his men to blow up the vessel. An Indian, who understood English, warned his comrades and in a moment every one of the attackers left alive was over the side, and swimming or paddling furiously to the shore. When morning came the *Gladwyn* sailed triumphantly for Fort Detroit.

The siege of Detroit went on, but in a more or less half-hearted way. Pontiac gave up all hope of forcing the garrison to surrender. Provisions and ammunition were falling short, and many of the Indians, to escape starvation, began to depart for their hunting grounds. Some of the chiefs approached *Gladwyn* and expressed regret for "their bad conduct." Soon only the Ottawas remained to carry on the siege. Pontiac, in the early part of the struggle, had been receiving aid from the French posts and settlers along the Mississippi, but late

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in October word came from Neyon de Villiers, the commander of Fort Chartres, on the Mississippi, that, as England and France were at peace, Pontiac should bury the hatchet.

Pontiac now realized that he was beaten and sent a message to Gladwyn, declaring himself ready to make peace, and to urge all the tribes under his influence to do likewise. Fort Detroit was freed from the Indian menace. Pontiac, with his followers, paddled southward to the Maumee. He, however, had lost none of his hatred for the English, and during the following winter plotted a new confederacy. He sent his war belts and red hatchets all through the west and south, but made little headway. Vast preparations were being made by the English to punish the tribes that had taken up arms, and the wisest among the chiefs knew that in the end they would be defeated, and severely chastised.

A council was held at Niagara, attended by a vast concourse of Indians. After deliberating for nearly a month the chiefs present agreed to enter into an alliance with

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the British. Pontiac had not attended this council, but in May, 1765, had agreed to journey to Oswego in the following spring and conclude a treaty with Sir William Johnson, the British Superintendent of Indian Affairs. He kept his promise, and courageously journeyed eastward to attend a meeting where he would be surrounded by soldiers who had suffered much at his hands, whose comrades had been cruelly tortured and murdered by his orders.

At this council, addressing Sir William Johnson, he said:

“I take the Great Spirit to witness that what I am going to say I am determined steadfastly to perform. . . . While I had the French king by the hand, I held it fast; and now, having you, father, by the hand, I shall do the same.”

Pontiac faithfully kept his pledged word. For three years longer he wandered among the Indian nations along the Mississippi, and though there were outbreaks of Indian

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hostilities, in them he took no part. His end was an unhappy one. Instead of dying like a hero in battle, he was treacherously murdered by a Kaskaskia Indian, struck down from behind with no chance of defending himself.

