

# FRENCH-INDIAN WAR BELT

The French-Indian War Belt records the formation of an alliance between the British and the Haudenosaunee during the French and Indian War (1754-1763). This war was a regional expression of the global conflict between the British and French empires and determined which colonial power would dominate in North America. One of the key disputed territories was the Ohio River Valley spanning from Pennsylvania all the way to Illinois. In 1758, the Governor of Pennsylvania, William Denny, invited Haudenosaunee chiefs and other tribal governments from the region to come to Philadelphia to form an alliance to fight against the French.

This Belt depicts two human figures at either end connected by a solid line of purple wampum. The figures represent the governments of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the British Monarchy, and the line symbolizes the open path of peace and clear communication between them as the Euro-colonial conflict was navigated. The linked-figures motif, which appears on several other wampum belts, represents the Covenant Chain. The Covenant Chain is the Haudenosaunee conception of treaties as a living chain linking nations, governments, or clans together which requires regular “polishing” for the relationship to be preserved.