

A Small Number of Good Soldiers

The French and Indian War
A Comprehensive Historical Narrative

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to the millions of Native Americans who lost
their lives, land, and heritage.

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1 THE PLAYERS SET THE STAGE

"The land in the forks I think [is] extremely well situated for a fort, as it has the absolute command of both rivers."

— George Washington, 1753

The very first Europeans to arrive in the New World, British settlers established their founding community in 1607. What is now the state of Virginia, these colonists named their settlement "Jamestown" after the beloved King James of England. The following year, in 1608, France sent its finest to settle in what is now Quebec. Intending the territory to be a "New France," they founded the new capital there. But, Europeans did not arrive to a vacant land. North America had been settled for thousands of years by millions of Native Americans.

Native Americans often had established an intricate system of trading various resources and goods with the Europeans, who were, in turn, often needed a numerous things produced by American Indians. Wheat and French tobacco, for instance, are traded with Native Americans, who in turn traded the raw animal and vegetable products for the European goods. As French companies and individuals were able to establish relationships with the Native Americans and the Europeans, the American Indians were able to obtain the European goods, such as guns, powder, and cloth, which were essential for their survival.

2 BRITISH GENERALS

"The dead—the dying—the groans—lamentation—and cries along the road of the wounded for help ... were enough to pierce a heart of adamant [stone]."

— George Washington, regarding Edward Braddock's defeat

Appalled and mortified by George Washington's surrender to the French, London named Edward Braddock as the colonial military's commander-in-chief. A frank and egotistical man, Braddock gathered all of the colonial generals for an assembly one morning in April 1755, where he summarized his determined strategies for forcing French settlers out of the Ohio Country. The plan detailed four military movements to occur simultaneously. The first would be an attack on Fort Duquesne led by Braddock himself and two regularized regiments. The second involved two regiments led by the governor of Massachusetts to capture France's fort on Lake Ontario. The third, William Johnson was to lead a regiment of British soldiers and warriors of the Mohawk tribe to seize Fort St. Francois on Lake Champlain. And finally, the fourth military would consist of two British and two Mohawk regiments, which was supposed to go against French soldiers in and around the area of Ohio.

— From the diary of a French officer at Fort Frontenac

Perhaps even more consequential than suffering a series of defeats, Lord Loudoun's failures gave French leaders the time and confidence to plot and organize offensive strategies. Stationed at the southern end of Lake Ontario, the French first targeted Fort Oswego. Lieutenant Colonel James Mercer and the eleven hundred Fort Oswego soldiers whom he commanded confronted more than three thousand French soldiers on August 10, 1756. Led by Louis-Joseph, marquis de Montcalm, Count de Saint-Vincent, Baron of French, Native American, and Canadian men took the fort almost effortlessly, killing Mercer himself with one of their cannonballs. The French seized the fort's weapons, including guns, cannons, food, and horses. Any British soldiers who survived the attack, Montcalm captured as war prisoners, giving his word that he would transport them safely to Canada where he would hold them until the war ended. The British's Native American allies were not so thoroughly captured, but they were captured in the end, and in 1759, the British evacuated the fort and the region around it.

4 CANADA AND THE END

"The Marquis de Montcalm is at the head of a great number of bad soldiers, and I am at the head of a small number of good ones, that wish for nothing so much as to fight him—but the wary old fellow avoids an action doubtful of the behavior of his army."

— British General James Wolfe

After their series of victories against the French, British military leaders began plotting their next move. Having won control over nearly all of Lake Ontario and its shores, which subsequently blocked crucial French communications between its western and eastern fronts, the British sealed the deal when they seized Louisbourg, the French city that had once protected the St. Lawrence River and its wayway into Canada. Announcing that it was time to launch the long-awaited invasion on Canada, British secretary of state William Pitt devised a plan in 1758 that would accomplish this objective in merely three steps. First, British troops would attack Fort Mifflin, which the French used as a harbinger between their western front and the British in New England. Next, the appointed General Jeffrey Amherst would capture the Fort Mifflin, a move that would enable the British to proceed with their second objective. Last, British troops would capture the French city of Louisbourg, which would enable the British to launch their final assault on Quebec.

5 BACK IN EUROPE

"I'm Frederick the Great, I am. Frederick the Great I am, I am. I got married to a woman I don't love. 'Cause war is all I've time for thinking of."

— Satirical Poem, author unknown

Prior to the beginning of the French and Indian War in North America, steady alliances had been created throughout Europe that modestly balanced the powers between its major players. Britain had aligned itself with Austria and Holland, and France joined relations with Prussia, a country that was once comprised of contemporary portions of Russia, Poland, and Germany, but no longer exists today. But in 1756, when France made secret deals with Austria and Britain made parallel deals with Prussia, these relationships flipped. In the balance of power established, war broke out in Europe. Some historians say that the origin was the capturing of Britain's fleet at Minorca, an island in the Mediterranean. Others say that it began when Britain captured by surprise a French fortress, which belonged to the French. We never know for sure, but the war ultimately began when France, the British, and Prussia's different groups in North America began to fight. When we see the map of the French and Indian War, we can see that the British and the French were fighting for control of the Ohio River valley.

6 NATIVE AMERICANS

"The Six Nations, Western Indians, etc., having never been conquered, either by the English or French, nor subject to their Laws, consider themselves a free people."

— William Johnson

Britain's victory in Canada brought an end to their war with the French, but it was only the beginning of their conflict with Native Americans. The tribes had grown accustomed to French settlers and considered them to be amicable neighbors. Not only had they established a mutually beneficial trade relationship, but out of respect, the French avoided settling in Native American territory. However, the British were not nearly as respectful. At the end of the war, thousands of British soldiers moved out west, settling land that had always and only belonged to Native Americans. Additionally, the Native Americans felt that British soldiers were entitled to another reward. They dropped down guns and other goods like, and their developments pushed several game animals out of their range.

7 AMERICAN SIGNIFICANCE

“And it is silly how all the should've been, could've been and might've been hypothetical situations can bother you more than all the wrong that has already been!”

— Moulika Danak

France and Great Britain both attempted to declare themselves the world hegemon by going to war with each other on four different accounts. A frequently over-looked era in the history of America, between 1754 and 1763, British-American colonists and their Native American allies fought French-American colonists and the alliances they had also made with Native Americans. Out of the four wars fought by the two empires, it was the outcome of the French and Indian War that determined Great Britain to be the most powerful empire. For France, the war damaged the country as it was burdened by insurmountable debts, and it dismantled what little colonies it held across the globe. Consequently, it also provided an incentive for European powers to compete, leading them to support the American colonies with increased efforts all during the struggle for independence from Britain. After the American Revolution, the United States emerged as one of the most powerful nations in the world, and it was the result of the French and Indian War.

The French and Indian War was a conflict between the British and the French in North America. It was part of a larger conflict between the two nations, known as the Seven Years' War. The war was fought between 1754 and 1763, and it was the last major conflict between the two nations. The war was fought in North America, and it was the last major conflict between the two nations. The war was fought in North America, and it was the last major conflict between the two nations.

ABOUT THE PUBLISHER

Author of *The Receptacle*, *To Really Know the Narcissist*, *Girl Carnival*, *You Can Only Keep as Much as You Can Carry*, *My Brother's Keeper*, and *Another Memoir*, Kaylie Ann Pickett graduated from the University of Indianapolis with a BA in political science, and is pursuing her MFA in creative writing at the University of San Francisco. In her spare time, Pickett enjoys playing the piano, listening to blues music, and taking long naps with her cat, Bubba Ghee.