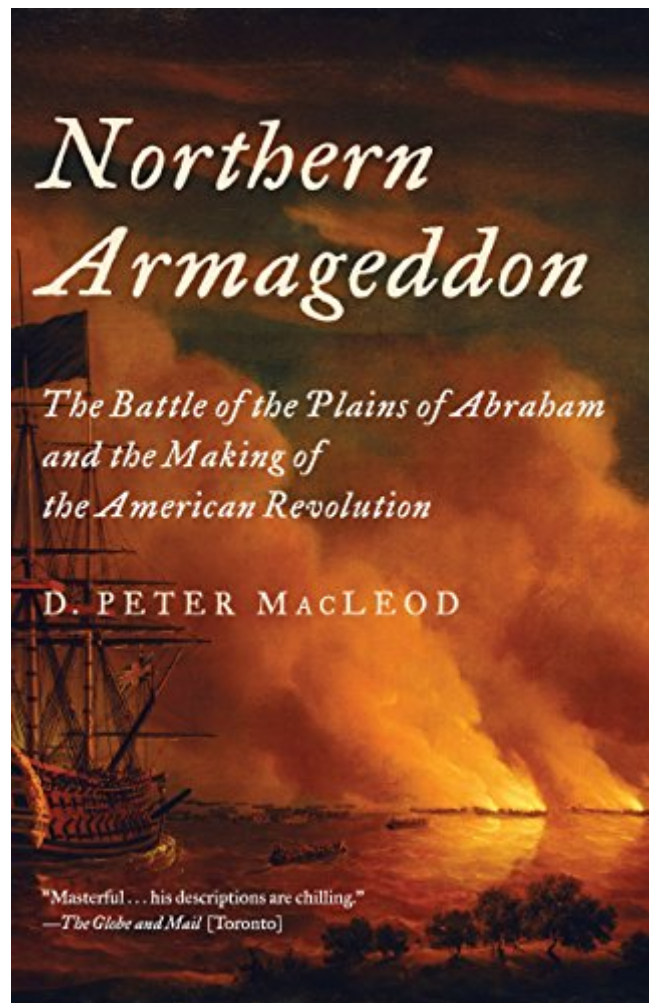




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Northern Armageddon: The Battle Of The Plains Of Abraham And The Making Of The American Revolution



Synopsis

A huge, ambitious re-creation of the eighteenth-century Battle of the Plains of Abraham, the pivotal battle in the Seven Years' War (1754–1763) to win control of the trans-Appalachian region of North America, a battle consisting of the British and American colonists on one side and the French and the Iroquois Confederacy on the other, and leading directly to the colonial War of Independence and the creation of Canada. It took five years of warfare fought on three continents—Europe, Asia, and North America—to bring the forces arrayed against one another—Britain, Prussia, and Hanover against France, Austria, Sweden, Saxony, Russia, and Spain (Churchill called it “the first world war”)—to the plateau outside Quebec City, on September 13, 1759, on fields owned a century before by a fisherman named Abraham Martin . . . It was the final battle of a three-month siege by the British Army and Navy of Quebec, the walled city that controlled access to the St. Lawrence River and the continent's entire network of waterways; a battle with the British utilizing 15,000 soldiers, employing 186 ships, with hundreds of colonists aboard British warships and transports from Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, with France sending in a mere 400 reinforcements in addition to its 3,500 soldiers. The battle on the Plains of Abraham lasted twenty minutes, and at its finish the course of a continent was changed forever . . . New military tactics were used for the first time against standard European formations . . . Generals Wolfe and Montcalm each died of gunshot wounds . . . France surrendered Quebec to the British, setting the course for the future of Canada, paving the way for the signing of the Treaty of Paris that gave the British control of North America east of the Mississippi, and forcing France to relinquish its claims on New Orleans and to give the lands west of the Mississippi to Spain for surrendering Florida to the British. After the decisive battle, Britain's maritime and colonial supremacy was assured, its hold on the thirteen American colonies tightened. The American participation in ousting the French as a North American power spurred the confidence of the people of New York, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts, who began to agitate for independence from Great Britain. Sixteen years later, France, still bitter over the loss of most of its colonial empire, intervened on behalf of the patriots in the American Revolutionary War (1775–1783). In Northern Armageddon, Peter MacLeod, using original research—diaries, journals, letters, and firsthand accounts—and bringing to bear all of his extensive knowledge and grasp of warfare and colonial North American history, tells the epic story on a human scale. He writes of the British at Quebec through the eyes of a master's mate on one of the ships embroiled in the battle. And from the French perspective, as the British bombarded Quebec, of four residents of the city—a priest, a clerk, a nun, and a notary—caught in the crossfire.

MacLeod gives us as well the large-scale ramifications of this clash of armies, not only on the shape of North America, but on the history of Europe itself. A stunning work of military history.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a welcome book on the battle for Quebec, which helped determine the outcome of the so-called French and Indian War. The focus in this book is that climactic battle, although it also provides a context for the struggle. The British had had difficulties fighting the French mixed forces (regular army, militia, and Native Americans) and the French were apparently well situated in their defense of Quebec. One point made by the author is that Quebec's defense was enhanced immensely by a geological formation going back 500,000 years. The Quebec Promontory was a raised formation six miles long and a half mile wide. Attackers had to scale a steep slope up from the river and elsewhere along the promontory. Quebec and French forces held that piece of ground. The leader of the French forces at Quebec was General Montcalm, who had established a pretty good record in the war. On the English side? General Wolfe. The English, with their fleet, had control of the river. The French forces--and citizens of Quebec--struggled with acquiring enough food and other needed goods. There is a nice discussion of how the French strove to create logistics to

provide food and other needed goods. Wolfe and the English were quite frustrated in trying to take Quebec. Oddly enough, after his successes, Montcalm was "down" over his view of the French prospects. The story continues. . . . Observing the Promontory along the St. Lawrence River, he came to see that an attack might be made. And, because they saw the heights as unscalable, the French had only small forces guarding the heights. As many know, Wolfe was able to bring his troops up the steep grade to the Plains of Abraham. When the French became aware of this, they moved to meet the British.. Montcalm seemed to lose control of events. The battle was difficult. In the aftermath, with the French withdrawing and both commanding generals dead, the British moved to put Quebec under siege. Pretty much all that was left to defend the city were militia. With food supplies dwindling and British cannonades, morale dropped. The story goes on to consider the second battle of the Plains of Abraham (I had not realized that there was a second battle!). Although the French won the contest, it was too late. Quebec fell, the French retreated, and the inevitable British victory ensued. This book does a fine job outlining the process in detail, providing much information. The aftermath, too, is discussed. This book is worthy of being added to one's library.

This is excellent and detailed coverage of the pivotal battle in the French & Indian War portion of the world-wide Seven Years War - interesting and little known details of the various efforts leading up to the fall of Quebec including the very tenuous 'hold' the British actually had over Quebec during the winter months until relief arrived in the spring - British ships and not French that arrived first; many facts regarding the naval aspects of this campaign including how 18th century landings were carried out; numerous details about the civilians (on both sides) and how the Canadians survived the British bombardments... a fascinating part of our American founding (what if the British kept the Caribbean islands and left Canada to the French in The Treaty of Paris - would the colonists have been so ready to over-throw the British who were 'protecting' them from the French and Indians to the west?) presented in a wonderfully well written and engrossing manner! An excellent book - very highly recommended!

For history lovers the book was well worth reading. It was thoroughly researched and provided a good picture of all out warfare against everyone, including civilians. Wolfe is depicted as a merciless warrior who used any means to conquer Montreal. The hero of the Battle of Culloden was a careful leader and quick to seize opportunities, but completely focused on victory to the exclusion of everything else.

An easy five stars for a book well-written by someone a master of the era, the place, and the details. Macleod has obviously lived with the subject a long time. To illustrate how good it is, I will mention it's only fault: he might have told us that "L'Anse au Foulon", the name of the most critical site, means "Cove of The Fullers Earth" a clay used in washing clothes. A good laundry spot needs a trail to it - and it was just that trail that determined the outcome. Pretty minor for perhaps the only fault.

i like history, and I found this to be history that i enjoyed reading .

Almost finished with this book. Great history.

I rate this book four stars on my background on this subject and this book goes into considerable detail way beyond my interest level. This isn't a knock on the book; it's my problem in not having the background knowledge on this subject. To me what the story boils down to is that the British under General James Wolfe attacked the French led by General Louis Montcalm at the Plains of Abraham in the town of Quebec. Both Wolfe and Montcalm were killed. The British were able to maintain control of Canada because the British prevented French ships from supplying the colony. However, the English victory in the French and Indian War resulted in considerable debt for England and they, in turn, wanted the colonies in America to bail them out by imposing taxes on the English in America which led to the American Revolution. That, to me, is the story presented in this book Northern Armageddon. As I mentioned previously the detail in the book was beyond my interest level but those with a greater interest should not have the same problem I had. Neophytes like myself may choose a simpler version on this subject. My three star rating in no way detracts from the scholarship of this book.

Excellent book.

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