



Paths of Glory: The Life and Death of General James Wolfe

Stephen Brumwell

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WINNER: 2008 C. P. STACEY PRIZE (Best book in Canadian Military History) WINNER: 2008

DISTINGUISHED BOOK AWARD, SOCIETY OF COLONIAL WARS Ugly, gangling, and tormented by agonising illness, Major General James Wolfe was an unlikely hero. Yet in 1759, on the Plains of Abraham before Quebec, he won a battle with momentous consequences. Wolfe's victory, bought at the cost of his life, ensured that English, not French, would become the dominant language in North America. Ironically, by crippling French ambitions on this continent Wolfe paved the way for American independence from Britain. Already renowned for bold leadership, Wolfe's death at the very moment of victory at Quebec cemented his heroic status on both sides of the Atlantic. He became an icon of patriotic self-sacrifice, immortalised in epic paintings and verse. During the past half century, however, Wolfe's reputation has undergone sustained assault by revisionist historians who see him as a bloodthirsty and self-righteous mediocrity, famous for one singularly lucky - though crucial - victory. Was there more to James Wolfe than a celebrated death? Stephen Brumwell's internationally praised biography seeks to answer that question, drawing on extensive research to offer a boldly argued reassessment of a soldier whose short but dramatic life changed the course of world history.

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