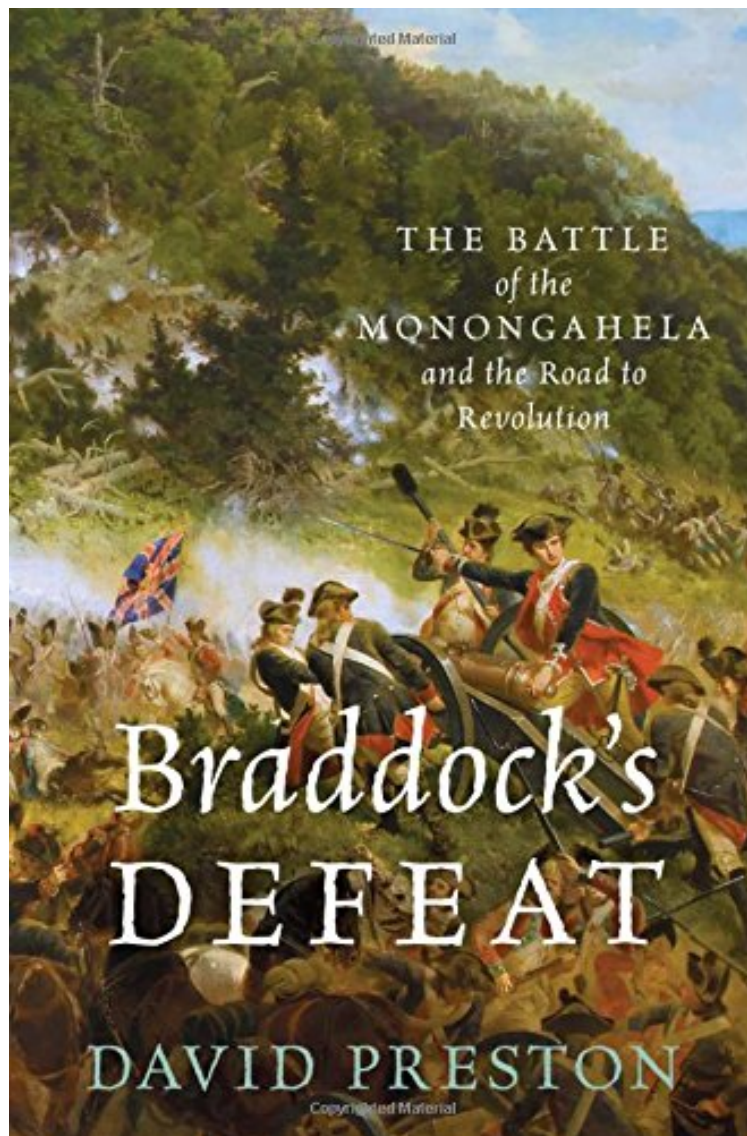


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## Braddock's Defeat: The Battle of the Monongahela and the Road to Revolution (Pivotal Moments in American History)

David L. Preston

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David L. Preston : Braddock's Defeat: The Battle of the Monongahela and the Road to Revolution (Pivotal Moments in American History) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Braddock's Defeat: The Battle of the Monongahela and the Road to Revolution (Pivotal Moments in

American History):

48 of 48 people found the following review helpful. A New Definitive Study of an Iconic Battle that Helped to Shape the Nation By Richard W. Preston. Prof. Preston has written a superb account of this iconic battle that epitomized the tactical differences as between the French Canadian - Indian forces (until Montcalm changed them) and Britain's traditional, Europe-derived massed infantry and volley fire. This is a fine "update" to the work of Kopperman, and may well be the definitive account for our times. Preston has found some important new sources, including a speech by an Iroquois warrior that sheds some light on one of Preston's main points: the Indian allies of New France had their own agenda(s), and allied with the French when that offered material and enduring rewards. This warrior also explained why some traditional Indian allies of the Brits were not so eager to support Braddock's "invasion" of the over-the-mountains territory that the Indians believed (with some obvious reasons) was their homeland: young George Washington, after his contacts with the French at the forks of the Ohio failed to consult with these Indian allies. This played into the widespread suspicion among the Indians that the French and the British had an overarching goal of eliminating them (the Indians) even while fighting each other for primacy. Preston also dispels the old conventional wisdom of Braddock's generalship as being overly strict, hidebound, reflexive and narrowly confined by European traditions. Instead, Preston shows how, at several times, Braddock showed himself to be a "soldier's general," even holding the American colonial members of his expedition to a little lower standard of military conduct. He did not, however, neglect to institute extensive measures for march security, even with very few Indian scouts available. And Braddock never uttered the derogatory words about and to Indians that others attributed to him after he died in battle. But this isn't mere revisionism for its own sake; Preston's scholarship is highly impressive. His work is extensively noted, and his bibliography is extensive. Preston spends most of this work narrating the history of the march, showing its extreme difficulties, which Preston has personally confirmed on the ground by walking portions of Braddock's Road that still exist, and by paddling down the rivers. This all highlights how radical this attempt was to project military power into the American heartland. Preston also hints at the question whether march fatigue and loss of sleep contributed to the performance of the troops when attacked. However, he astutely points out that the British troops stood and fought for some 3 hours a virtually invisible enemy who had assumed an ambush formation the length of the British line of march. This does not suggest undisciplined, panicked, incompetent soldiery. The real story of the Monongahela, Preston shows, was the victory of the French and Indians due to their superior woodlands tactics. Preston corrects the traditional record that the French commander, Beaujeu, won over the Indian allies only at the last minute with a speech full of bravado and challenge. Instead, the Indians, who came from many tribes and from all over the modern US Midwest to the Atlantic lands, held their own council at least one day before the battle. They agreed to stand with the French, and brought numbers to raise the combined French Indian force to about 950 fighters, over 2/3rds of whom were Indians, and it turned out the battle was mostly an Indian victory. Preston goes on to provide some thought-provoking conclusions, and adds several highly useful appendices, including the two sides' respective orders of battle, the casualty lists, the Iroquois' hitherto undiscovered speech, an account from the French side, etc. This book is well-written in clear, concise prose that flows without distractions that limit the conveyance of information. It is the best book I have read on the subject by quite a margin, and is likely to stand as the definitive account of this battle for a long time. I recommend this for anyone interested in the American Frontier, our military and historical heritage, and as a vignette of what war fighting was like in America before there were roads, railroads, etc. This book deserves its 5 stars.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Definitive Account - Breaks New Ground By Darryl R. Smith. What is now the definitive account of Braddock's campaign and defeat, Mr. Preston weaves a detailed yet flowing account of the trials that both sides dealt with for the campaign. This not yet another retelling of the conventional story. Certainly portions of the story will be familiar for those who have read on the campaign previously, but Mr. Preston does excellent work in shattering some of the accepted conventions that previous authors failed to diligently investigate. Example - Braddock wasn't so haughty and dismissive with his Indian allies as other accounts would lead you to believe. This is only one "myth" that Preston digs into to provide us a fresh perspective. Recommended!

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. English and French and Indians Clash Near the Forks of the Ohio By B. J. Hobar. Read this book if you are interested in learning the details of the English and French and Indian sides of the campaign, the Battle of the Monongahela, and the aftermath. The book is academic in style, fully documented, but very readable. Maps and illustrations are effective and useful. The author did incredible research and his book includes the origin of Braddock's force in Great Britain, the troops' harrowing voyage across the Atlantic in the winter, the assembly for combat in Alexandria, Va., the march by OVER the primeordial Appalachians, and the terrible collision with the French and Indians in the forest at present-day Braddock, Pa. The author included a description of the difficult French trek from Quebec through Lake Ontario, Lake Erie, and the St. Lawrence and the dense woods in Pennsylvania to Fort Duquesne at the Forks of the Ohio. (As an old person with eye issues, I resorted to an electronic copy on my Kindle and iPad to help in reading, but I have the splendid hardback on my shelf!)

Braddock's Defeat by David Preston is a "classic work by one of the most gifted young historians working today,"

according to series editor David Hackett Fischer. Finalist, 2016 George Washington Book Prize Winner, 2015 Guggenheim-Lehrman Prize in Military History Winner, 2016 Distinguished Book Award in U.S. History, Society for Military History Winner, 2016 PROSE Award for U.S. History Category, Association of American Publishers Winner, 2016 Distinguished Book Award, Society for Colonial Wars

"This ill-fated campaign has attracted the attention of many fine historians, yet none of them has explored it so thoughtfully and compellingly as David Preston." -- Stephen Brumwell, *The Wall Street Journal* "Historian David Preston has written the definitive book on the Battle of the Monongahela. 'Braddock's Defeat'...is comprehensive, fast-paced and authoritative." --Pittsburgh Post-Gazette "David Preston has offered what will probably be the final word on one of the most important battles in North American history. This engaging, thorough book debunks timeworn myths about Edward Braddock and his soldiers while affording their French and American Indian foes long overdue attention and credit for what was their victory more than 'Braddock's Defeat.' A vital contribution and singular scholarly achievement." --John W. Hall, Ambrose-Hesseltine Chair in U.S. Military History, University of Wisconsin-Madison "This compelling and meticulous book revisits the opening shots of a war that would not end until the French defeat at Waterloo, and a war that also planted seeds of American revolution. Braddock's Defeat is an invaluable addition to any library of military history." --Bernard Cornwell, author of *Waterloo: The History of Four Days, Three Armies, and Three Battles* "Professor Preston handles this complex tale, involving tactics, strategy, logistics, personalities, diplomacy and the differing cultures of the British, French, Indians, and the increasingly self-aware American colonials, with masterly skill. The result is the best book ever written on this singularly important colonial battle." --John Steele Gordon "A vivid, sweeping account of a battle with singular impact on American history. The brilliant scholarship behind Braddock's Defeat is exceeded only by David L. Preston's storytelling verve." --Rick Atkinson, author of *THE LIBERATION TRILOGY* "Preston has investigated this important, though somewhat obscure, event in American history and penned an absorbing account rich in details, logical in its conclusions and written with great narrative drive. This is definitely in the "Good Read" category." —The Post and Courier "With impressive research, new evidence, and close attention to terrain as well as to tactics, David Preston dismantles old stereotypes and provides a fuller understanding of the British, French, and Indian participants in the conflict. A compelling account that will surely become the definitive study of this pivotal battle." --Colin G. Calloway, John Kimball, Jr. 1943 Professor of History and Professor of Native American Studies, Dartmouth College, and author of *The Victory with No Name* "Preston sought to write a definitive history of the seminal 1755 battle of the Monongahela and he succeeded." --Western Pennsylvania History "Braddock's Defeat is unsurprisingly reminiscent of series editor David Hackett Fischer's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Washington's Crossing* in style and scope. By uncovering new archival materials, performing geographic analysis (complete with the author personally visiting and photographing the sites), and relying on the judgments of the battle's veterans, Preston has rehabilitated Braddock. Concluding with old friends and comrades Washington and Gage facing each other in Boston in 1775, it has also proven the battle's influence on the Revolution. Overall, this career-defining book is essential reading for the study of the French and Indian War and the Revolution." --Craig Bruce Smith, *Journal of Military History* "Far more comprehensive and detailed than any previous work on the 1755 campaign against Fort Duquesne, Braddock's Defeat will remain the definitive text on the Battle of the Monongahela for decades to come." --Matthew J. Wayman, *Journal of Military History* "This is a fascinating book which provides the reader with a complete picture of the battle and challenges some long-held assumptions with insight and analysis." --Military Heritage "David Preston's excellent new book presents a fresh look at Edward Braddock." --Patrick J. Walsh, *The Weekly Standard* "Braddock's Defeat" is a wonderful work, filled with the detail that comes not only from libraries, archives, letters, memoirs, and manuscripts, but Preston's walking the paths that led Edward Braddock to his doom." --On Point: The Journal of Army History About the Author David L. Preston is the Westvaco Professor of National Security Studies at the Citadel. He is the author of *The Texture of Contact: European and Indian Settler Communities on the Frontiers of Iroquoia, 1667-1783*, which won the 2010 Albert B. Corey Prize, a biennial award for best book on American-Canadian relations, from the American Historical Association and Canadian Historical Association.