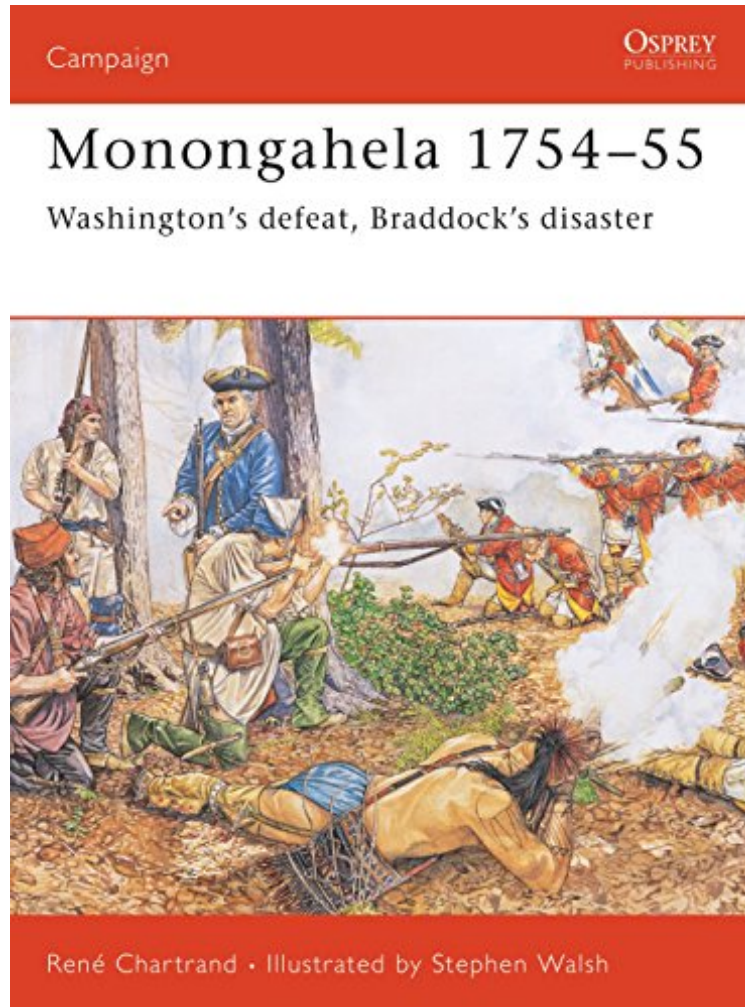


[Free pdf] Monongahela 1754–55: Washington's defeat, Braddock's disaster (Campaign)

Monongahela 1754–55: Washington's defeat, Braddock's disaster (Campaign)

René Chartrand

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René Chartrand : Monongahela 1754–55: Washington's defeat, Braddock's disaster (Campaign) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Monongahela 1754–55: Washington's defeat, Braddock's disaster (Campaign):

24 of 26 people found the following review helpful. Wilderness PowerBy R. A. ForczykRené Chartrand's Monongahela 1754-1755, #140 in Osprey's Campaign series, is another excellent volume on the Seven Years War in North America from the French perspective. Chartrand brings his extensive knowledge on the subject, combined with an insightful writing style, to produce a fresh look on how the war started. American readers will find this volume particularly interesting due to the critical role played by young Colonel George Washington. Furthermore, readers will

find that the standard succinct descriptions of Braddock's defeat have left out many important details, which Chartrand assiduously fills in. The initial sections on background to the war, opposing leaders and opposing armies are good, and cover about 20 pages. In the section on opposing plans, Chartrand notes how the French relied on a defensive strategy based on "Wilderness Power" to deny the Ohio River valley to the British. Essentially, the French center of gravity - in modern military parlance - was based upon their close relationship with the local Indian tribes. The limited French military capabilities in the region were enhanced by adoption of local tactics and fast-moving river-borne communications; taken together, the Indian connections and willingness to adapt to local conditions gave the French military "Wilderness Power" that the conventional-minded British lacked. On the other hand, Chartrand points out that the British relied on the doctrine of overwhelming force and the commitment of Braddock's army to western Pennsylvania represented an unprecedented act that was intended to overawe both the French and Indians. Chartrand includes five 2-D maps (Situation in North America 1753-4; French forts in Ohio; Route of Braddock's army; the Monongahela, 9 July 1755; Situation in North America, Fall 1755) and three 3-D maps (Jumonville Glen and Fort Necessity; Monongahela ambush; Monongahela - the rout). The three battle scenes are excellent: Fort Necessity, Braddock's defeat and Washington's rearguard. The 3-D maps utilize the new format, with grid lines and all text sequenced on one side of the page. Chartrand also includes an excellent order of battle, as well as interesting notes and photographs on the sites today. Chartrand begins his campaign narrative by describing the Jumonville incident and the surrender of Fort Necessity in 1754, both incidents in which Washington was in command and failed. Although the defeat at Fort Necessity was probably inevitable, the Jumonville incident is highly controversial and Chartrand treats this incident carefully (some other authors use this incident to denigrate Washington's integrity). Chartrand covers Braddock's march westward in great detail and it is clear that despite the disastrous tactical outcome, Braddock and his staff were to be commended for the impressive logistic in moving an army with artillery over such terrain. It is also clear that the French had little tactical plan to deal with Braddock's army, but they realized that if he got within artillery range of Fort Duquesne - their main base of operations in the area - that British victory was virtually assured. As Chartrand interprets the battle that occurred on 9 July 1755 near the Monongahela River, both sides blundered into the fight due to poor reconnaissance. Few other accounts mention that the British even had the better of the initial exchange and killed the French commander at the outset. However, the British were caught in column and the Indians and Canadian militia swarmed down its flanks, ripping into the packed infantry masses with well-aimed fire. In relatively short order, the British unit cohesion began to fall apart as casualties rapidly mounted and what began as a relatively simple ambush soon became a rout. Nearly one-third of the Anglo-American army was killed, with most of the rest wounded. Amazingly, Washington was the only senior officer unwounded and he held together a rearguard that allowed many of the survivors to escape. Although the French won a complete victory, most of their Indian friends quickly went home with their spoils, leaving only a handful of Frenchmen to hold the area. Furthermore, French regular officers began to arrive in Canada and they preferred conventional tactics to the militia's "wilderness tactics." The defeated British had also learned the lesson that more light forces were needed in this type of terrain and started to raise such units for the next effort, which would ultimately be successful. Thus, the French advantage of "Wilderness power" was relatively short-lived.

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By John Fitzmaurice
Great maps.
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By Daniel D. Aranda
satisfied

Osprey's examination of one of the key campaigns of the French and Indian War (1754-1763). On 9 July 1755 amid the wilderness of North America, Britain suffered one of the most humiliating defeats in her history. General Braddock's army, a mixture of British regulars and American militia, was shattered, losing over 900 men from a force of 1,300. Braddock was killed and the remnants of his army rescued by his aide, Colonel George Washington. The origins of this defeat can be traced back to the death of a junior French officer little more than a year before in a relatively minor skirmish with a party of Virginian militia commanded by the same George Washington. René Chartrand examines the subsequent chain of events that ultimately sparked a world war.

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About the Author
René Chartrand was born in Montreal and educated in Canada, the United States and the Bahamas. A senior curator with Canada's National Historic Sites for nearly three decades, he is now a freelance writer and historical consultant. He has written numerous articles and books including almost 30 Osprey titles. He lives in Gatineau, Quebec, with his wife and two sons.