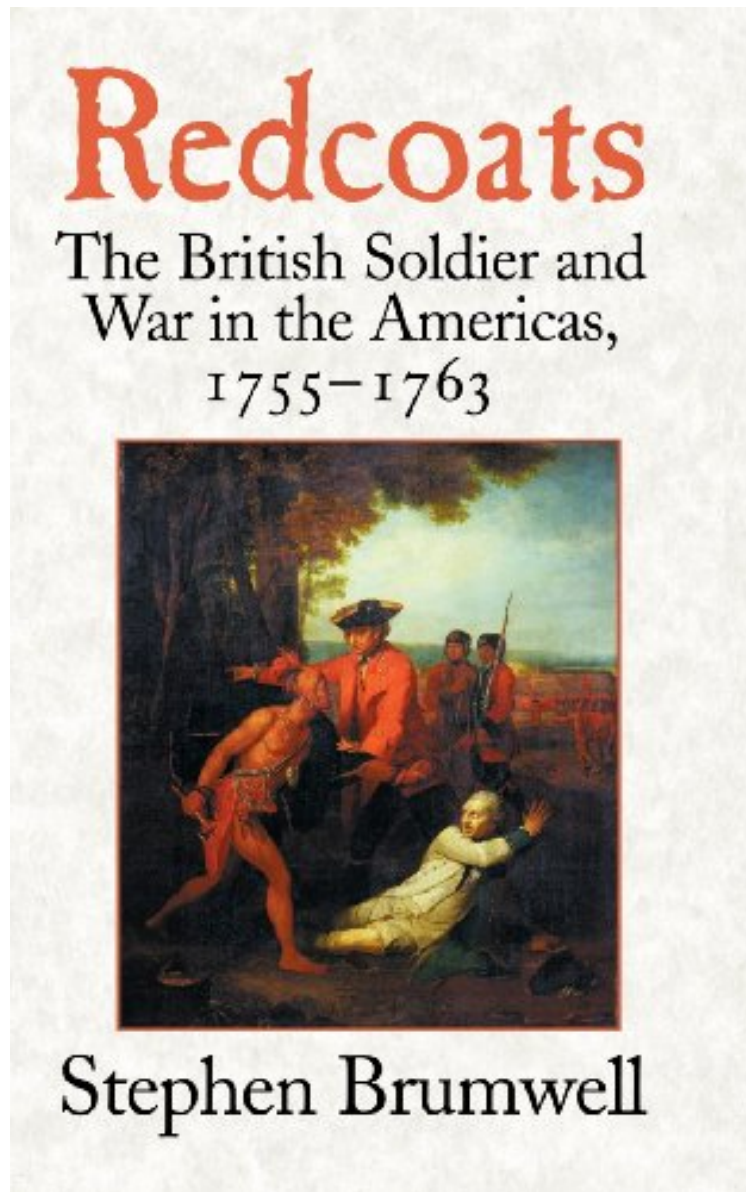


## Redcoats: The British Soldier and War in the Americas, 1755-1763

*Stephen Brumwell*

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**Stephen Brumwell : Redcoats: The British Soldier and War in the Americas, 1755-1763** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Redcoats: The British Soldier and War in the Americas, 1755-1763:

24 of 24 people found the following review helpful. An Excellent Book On The RedcoatsBy Ed Gaudelli Jr.This is

one of the best books that I have read on the British soldier in North America. It dispels the misinformation that the redcoats did not know how to fight on this continent. When covering the Braddock Expedition of 1755, there are many reasons given for the expedition's failure other than "the British were used to European linear warfare type tactics". When one looks at the battle that was fought between Montcalm and Wolfe on the Plains of Abraham, this too was fought in classic "European" style as were many battles in the American Revolution some twenty years later. This book shows that the British Redcoat had indeed learned to "improvise, adapt, overcome" in order to survive in the New World. Towards the end of the war, the Brits had even developed light infantry units and had the native Americans complaining that "the British refuse to stand still and let us kill them". This book is a must for any serious student of the War for Empire. 15 of 15 people found the following review helpful. A Practical Look at the Soldiers of Britain in the War for Empire. By Lord Robert Drumm. Having recently met Dr. Brumwell, a soft-spoken gentleman. And having had the pleasure of discussing this book. He asked me a simple question, after he made sure I'd actually read the book, "Did you agree or disagree with the content?" I assured him that I totally agreed with him, as it was 'bang on' with the research I had completed. I have been trying for some years to explain that soldiers in the war did not venture about the wilds in their 'Sunday Best' and on the contrary were quite adapted for this forest warfare by 1758. This book when carefully read will give a true picture of the adaptation both common soldier and officer had made. As a reenactor of 'the Black Watch' in this time period, I need only to point to this book as a primary source for documentation for our strange uniforms and tactics. I highly recommend this book to the scholar and reenactor alike. It is very refreshing to see such a large amount of study going into something like this. And as I had told Stephen, "If it were in my power, I'd see to it you'd receive a medal, for a job very well done." He, on the other hand, said, "I could only wish." 19 of 19 people found the following review helpful. Very well-researched and well-written. It is very refreshing to see a book about the Seven Years War in America that combines solid academic scholarship and research with insightful interpretation -- all in a readable format. This is not a romanticized account of soldiers vs. savages. Rather, this is a history of the redcoat himself, not a chronological account of the French and Indian War (If you want the latter, simply read Fred Anderson's superb "Crucible of War.") Brumwell describes the redcoat's life, background, recruitment, service, etc. through a variety of perspectives, including one quite interesting chapter on the use of Highland regiments in America. His detailed account of how soldiers were recruited, drafted and transferred for service in the British regiments during this period is particularly valuable. This author strives to make the point that the "man in the ranks" who shouldered a musket under very trying conditions, for poor pay and in dangerous conditions, should be seen as the main reason for the success of British arms in the colonies.

This book examines the experiences of the British Army soldiers, or 'redcoats', who fought in North America and the West Indies between 1755 and 1763. It explores the Army's distinctive society, using new evidence to provide a voice for ordinary soldiers who have previously been ignored by historians. While other books on the period concentrate upon major personalities and events, this study examines events from the perspective of the individual: the experience of combat, captivity among the Indians, the Army's women and the fate of veterans. Stephen Brumwell is a former newspaper journalist and Lecturer in Modern History at the University of Leeds and now works as a freelance writer. He is the author of scholarly articles and the co-author of *The Cassell Companion to 18th Century British History* (2001). Hb ISBN (2001) 0-521-80783-2

From *Library Journal*: This new book by British freelancer Brumwell (coauthor, *Cassell's Companion to 18th-Century British History*) makes a nice companion to Fred Anderson's *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766* (LJ 2/1/00). Whereas Anderson gives a magisterial overview of the conflict, Brumwell concentrates on the experiences of the rank-and-file "Redcoats" in the British army. Drawing on wide-ranging research in North American and British archives, he revises the standard negative view of the ordinary British soldiers and their officers. This negative view sees the rank and file as the dregs of society who obeyed orders only out of fear of the lash, while their officers tended to be unimaginative fops or fools who had purchased their commissions. While not denying that there is an element of truth in these stereotypes, Brumwell demonstrates that by the end of the war Britain's "American Army" had become a flexible, impressive fighting machine. Brumwell notes the irony that George Washington's Continental Army owed much of its success to its emulation of the British army in the Seven Years' War. This is a noteworthy, engaging book for specialists as well as general readers. Highly recommended for all academic and public libraries. T.J. Schaeper, St. Bonaventure Univ., NY. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. "In a fascinating, judiciously researched, and well-written study, Stephen Brumwell offers a nuanced reassessment of the British soldier in the critical period of the Seven Years' War... This important book will enjoy a wide readership among specialists, students, and the general public. Its readability will make it a valuable addition in undergraduate survey courses and seminars." *Historian*: "Stephen Brumwell's account of the British Army in North America during the Seven Years' War offers the most complete, vivid, and sophisticated account we have of the experiences and views of eighteenth-century common soldiers. With wide research, lucid prose, and (above all) compassion, he counts the human costs of empire, and brings to life the terrible war that built it." Fred Anderson,

author of *The Crucible of War*"Stephen Brumwell's account of the British army in North America during the Seven Years' War offers the most complete, vivid, and sophisticated account we have of the experiences and views of eighteenth-century common soldiers. With wide research, lucid prose, and (above all) compassion, he counts the human costs of empire, and brings to life the terrible war that built it." Fred Anderson, author of *The Crucible of War*"Well-written and thoroughly researched, *Redcoats* explodes the patriotic American myth of the 'bloodybacks' as marginalized miscreants subjected to numbing discipline and inappropriate training. Brumwell's British regulars could win the Seven Years' War in America." Ian K. Steele, University of Western Ontario"Redcoats is a major scholarly accomplishment; an extremely well written and researched study of the Seven Years' War. Stephen Brumwell has done a brilliant job tracing the impact of the American war on the British Army while bringing to life the common soldiers and their war." Michael Bellesiles, Emory University"In sum, Brumwell's book makes a very good addition to the historiography of eighteenth-century soldiers in the British army and goes far toward correcting the notion that such soldiers were unwilling and unmotivated participants in a struggle that gained the British crown an empire." American Historical "Stephen Brumwell does justice to his subjects' remarkable achievements through a lively presentation of many soldier testimonies, exhaustive research in the army archives, and thoughtful analysis. The end result is a valuable contribution to military history." New York History"This is an excellent example of military history, that will at once be of value to scholars working on eighteenth-century Britain and also to those interested in the struggle for empire." Albion"Redcoats is a significant and innovative work which makes an important addition to the literature not only of the British army, but also of eighteenth-century Britain and North America." War in History, Matthew C. Ward, University of Dundee

About the AuthorA former newspaper journalist, Stephen Brumwell earned his Ph.D in History from the University of Leeds in 1998. He currently works as a freelance writer in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. His recent publications include *White Devil: A True Story of War, Savagery, and Vengeance in Colonial America*.