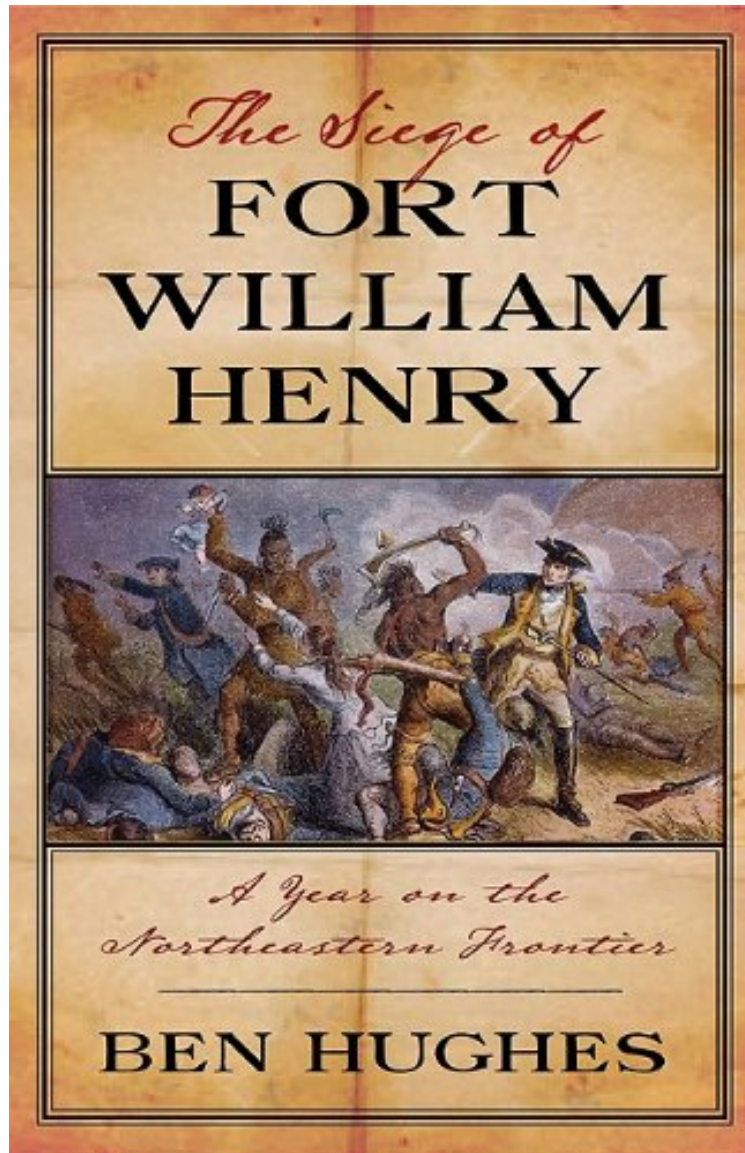


[Ebook free] The Siege of Fort William Henry: A Year on the Northeastern Frontier

# The Siege of Fort William Henry: A Year on the Northeastern Frontier

*Ben Hughes*

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**Ben Hughes : The Siege of Fort William Henry: A Year on the Northeastern Frontier** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Siege of Fort William Henry: A Year on the Northeastern Frontier:

15 of 15 people found the following review helpful. Oft-Told Tale Well Re-ToldBy Thomas M. SullivanLet me tell

you, there is nothing more deflating for someone who fancies himself a 'know-it-all' about a particular historical subject than to nonetheless keep reading and discover, well, a gap or two in the 'all.' And so it was with this excellent short work on one of my favorite subjects, the British surrender of Fort William Henry to the French in early August, 1757. As my other reviews will attest, I've read every account of the battle (usually presented in a larger historical context) I could find, from Parkman to Anderson, and from Steele to Bellico, along with various contemporary and later pamphlets and, of course, the seminal fictional version, 'The Last of the Mohicans.' Enforcing my certitude is the fact that I live about 1/3 of a mile due west of the fort's reconstruction (just to the south of the 'second battery'), and thus can literally walk to the prospect at the end of my street and envision the troop positions and events described in these narratives. So what's new and different about this author's version? First, Hughes does a splendid job of addressing the year and the siege while placing the events in the larger historical context of the FIW. He also adds a very significant number of details about the principals and the composition and disposition of the respective fighting forces, many, I'm reluctant to say, new to me. All in all, throughout the work, and entirely due to his meticulous explanations, the reader is always comfortable in understanding who is doing what to whom, and why. Second, he includes as appendices a comprehensive chronology covering the extended period from Verrazano's first exploration of the East Coast in 1524 to 1992's film version of 'The Last of the Mohicans' (I said 'comprehensive') and an absolutely terrific glossary containing brief descriptions of the various Indian tribes involved in the story, military terminology for equipment, maneuvers, etc. The glossary will be tremendously helpful to siege first-timers and makes one wonder why History authors so infrequently make the effort to compose similar helpers as related to their subject matter. Additionally, Hughes is a fine storyteller who writes in clear, concise prose and obviously made a real effort to stick to the heart of his tale and resist the clarion call to wander off into side yarns, no matter how beguiling. Rather, he better spends his time conveying gems such as the fascinating after-action careers of the principals, including the British commander Monro's untimely death, no doubt a result of his siege ordeal, and the ironic (but in the British Army of the time, not surprising) promotion of Stay-at-Edward Webb. But the 'know-it-all' has a cavil, and one I found disconcerting in the context of such a carefully constructed work. Understanding that the author's native England is a fair piece from Lake George, his given distances are often quite a way off, and he could have checked Google Earth before citing that from William Henry to Ticonderoga as 20 miles when it is actually 33, or from Fort Edward to Fort Ti as 30 when it is actually 42 (all as the crow flies, not carrying a musket). No small discrepancies given at the time the lack of even rudimentary byways made any sizeable troop and baggage movements truly daunting undertakings. That said, the 'know-it-all' knows a good bit more now and hazards to say that if a less knowledgeable (wink-wink) History buff were to ask me to recommend one, and only one, book about the siege, this would be it. 17 of 17 people found the following review helpful. History Made Real By billdalton "The Siege of Fort William Henry: A Year on the Northeastern Frontier" by Ben Hughes balances historical detail and readability very nicely. Reading this well-researched book brings the brutal reality of the French Indian wars from the distant past to today's reader. James Fenimore Cooper's "Last of the Mohicans" fictionalized many of the events described in Hughes' book, and, of course, took liberty with the facts, because it was a novel. The 1990s movie, "Last of the Mohicans" goes even further from the facts, so it is nice to get the real account. Hughes does not in any way gloss over the massacre that occurred, and his description of French General Montcalm's behavior was particularly interesting. In fact, there is barely a page that that is not interesting to anyone with an interest in history. 22 of 22 people found the following review helpful. The Siege of Fort William Henry: A Year on the Northeastern Frontier By Sulermont Excellent piece! Greatly clarifies the magnitude of the British and French conflict in North America, the complexities of the relationships with the Native Americans, the "class conflict" between the regular British troops and the Colonials, etc. Additionally, the fictional episode represented in Last of The Mohicans is set straight. For those who enjoy the French Indian War period, it is well worth the time to read.

Immortalized in *The Last of the Mohicans*, the True Story of a Pivotal Battle in the British and French War for the North American Continent The opening years of the French and Indian War were disastrous for the British. In 1755 General Braddock's troops were routed at the Battle of Monongahela and by the middle of 1756 Fort Oswego on Lake Ontario had fallen. Hindered by quarrelsome provincial councils, incompetent generals, and the redcoats' inability to adapt to wilderness warfare, Britain was losing the war. In 1757 the 35th Regiment of Foot stepped into the breach. A poorly trained assortment of conscripts, old soldiers, and convicted criminals led by Lieutenant Colonel George Monro, the regiment was destined to take center stage in the most controversial event of the war. Fort William Henry on the southern shore of New York's Lake George was a key fortification supporting British interests along the frontier with French America. Monro and his regiment occupied the fort in the spring of 1757 while Britain planned its attack on the key French fortress at Louisbourg, Nova Scotia. Learning that most of Britain's military resources were allocated to Louisbourg, the French launched a campaign along the weakened frontier. French Commander Louis-Joseph de Montcalm and his American Indian allies laid siege to Fort William Henry; Monro could not hold out and was forced to surrender. As part of the terms, the British regiment, colonial militia, and their camp followers would be allowed safe passage to nearby Fort Edward. The French watched in horror, however, as their Indian allies attacked

the British column after it left the fort, an episode that sparked outrage and changed the tactics of the war. Seen through the eyes of participants such as Louis Antoine de Bougainville, a scholarly young aide-de-camp, Jabez Fitch, an amiable Connecticut sergeant, and Kisensik, a proud Nipissing chief whose father once met Louis XIV in the marbled halls of Versailles, *The Siege of Fort William Henry: A Year on the Northeastern Frontier* uses contemporary newspaper reports, official documents, private letters, and published memoirs to bring the narrative to life. From Indian councils on the banks of the Saint Lawrence River and bustling military camps in northern New York to the narrative's bloody denouement on the shores of Lake George, the reader is immersed in the colorful, yet brutal world of eighteenth-century northeastern America.

The siege and the massacre that followed the surrender of the garrison in August 1757 are at the heart of this excellent book. . . . The whole forms a very good introduction to the Seven Years War in America. *Vae Victis* (Paris, France)